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A HISTORY OF MAITHILI LITERATURE

VOL. I

(EARLY AND MIDDLE PERIODS)

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A HISTORY OF MAITHILI LITERATURE
(Vol. II Modern Period)

THE FOLK LITERATURE OF MITHILÂ

A SHORT HISTORY OF MITHILÂ

A HISTORY OF
MAITHILI LITERATURE

VOL. I

(EARLY AND MIDDLE PERIODS)

By

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FOREWORD

The importance of Maithili, both as a language and as a literature, is being increasingly recognised. Of the contribution of Mithila to Sanskrit learning there has never been any doubt; but the fact that there is a separate spoken language and that there is a literature with an unbroken continuity for several centuries has been lost sight of, either through ignorance or a deliberate intention of minimising the significance of it. It is gratifying that during the last thirty or forty years the natives of Mithila have themselves become conscious of their rich heritage and have done much to bring before the discriminating public some of the works that establish the claim of Maithili to be recognised as among the major literary languages of the country—a language which is the cherished mother-tongue of about twenty million persons. One must gratefully acknowledge the work done by others—Grierson among foreigners—and Hara Prasad Shastri, Nagendranath Gupta, Suniti Kumar Chatterji, among our countrymen. The present work by Dr. Jayakanta Mishra is the first attempt to make a comprehensive survey of Mithila's language and literature. It is a work that must have entailed long and patient investigation. The author has familiarised himself with everything that has been published on the subject and has also had the advantage of consulting books still in manuscript form, whether in Mithila or in Nepal. It will be a valuable addition to the histories of Indian literatures and will prove of great use to all scholars.

Maithili has a script of its own and a grammar of its own. Its foremost literary figure is Vidyapati who had been claimed for

many years to be a Bengali poet and is now being claimed with even less justification to be a poet of Hindi. He was a very versatile writer. He wrote in Avahaṭṭha, in Sanskrit, and in Maithili. He was familiar with Persian words and had a knowledge of music. But it is mainly as a poet in Maithili that he is best known, as the author of exquisite love lyrics and of memorable devotional songs. There is hardly a home in Mithila where his poems are not sung, and have not been sung for centuries. I refer to his love lyrics, but they are not poems celebrating carnal love. As Sir George Grierson says:

> "To understand the allegory, it may be taken as a genereal rule that Radha represents the soul, the messenger or *duti* the evange-list or mediator, and Krishna of course the deity...The glowing stanzas of Vidyapati are read by the devout Hindu with as little of the baser part of human sensuousness as the Song of Solomn is by the Christian priest."

Another poet, only less well-known than Vidyapati, is Govindadas. He also was thought at one time to be a Bengali poet, though the kind attentions of Hindi scholars have not yet been turned to him. As Shri Nagendranath Gupta says: "It could be easily demonstrated that no Bengali poet bearing the name of Govindadas was ever able to equal or even approach the Maithili poet in the mellifluous smoothness of rhyme, or the dazzling witchery of words."

The third among the sons of light—first in point of time—was Jyotirishwara, the author of one of the earliest prose works in a north Indian language, *Varnanaratnákara*, of which an excellent edition has been brought out by the Asiatic Society of Bengal, under the able editorship of Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji and Pandit Babuaji Mishra. The prose style of this writer challenges comparison with that of Bāṇa

—in his *Kádambarí*—and Subandhu—in his *Vásavadattá.*

It is not necessary to refer to other writers, mediaeval or modern, beyond saying that there is hardly a subject or literary form that has not been attempted, with greater or less success. Dr. Mishra deserves well of scholars for having given us such a well-informed and detailed history.

Sept. 20, 1949 AMARANATHA JHA

INTRODUCTION

It is indeed a matter of great pleasure for me to write a few words of introduction to Dr. Jayakanta Misra's work on the history of Maithili literature, the first volume of which is now placed before the public.

Maithili is one of the important Aryan languages of present-day India, and it is now current among a population of over 13 millions of people (see p. 43). It has had a literary life at least as old as that of any other New Indo-Aryan speech, and this literary life is still flourishing in the language, although its speakers have been made to accept High Hindi also as their language of education, literature and public life for the last two generations. This acceptance of Hindi has been meeting with an opposition which is sometimes quite vigorous and active. The next two generations will decide the fate of Maithili for ever. General adoption of Hindi will mean widespread disintegration of Maithili even in its spoken forms, with an ever-increasing approximation in its words, forms and expressions to Standard Hindi. The desire to share in common political and intellectual life of Northern India as a whole, from Western Panjab to Bengal and from the Himalayan slopes to the Deccan, appears to be the main cause for the adoption of Hindi in place of Maithili as the language of the school and of public life. Nevertheless, with increased interest in one's mother-tongue as a result of the 20th Century Indian Renaissance, Maithili will continue to be the Maithili speaking people's most direct and natural expression of their life and thought.

Among those scholars and workers of Mithila who have a love for and pride in their mother-

tongue, a spirit of enquiry is now happily manifesting itself. And their advent has not been too soon. They are actuated by a laudable desire to appraise the importance of their speech in both its extent and its cultural content and achievement, and to see if it is well worth preserving and cultivating still further as a heritage that cannot be afforded to be lost. In short, they are applying science to understand the bases of their speech and its literary culture—its *vân'maya* or "things essentially connected with the speech", to give the all-embracing Indian term. Their researches, apart from their interest for Indian linguistics and literature as a whole, may have, for aught we know, an un-expected repercussion on the future of Maithili itself. The interest in Maithili researches, with the present position of the language in the literary, educational and political fields, now remains primarily academic. But it is easy for an established fact or idea to form the nucleus of an ideology; and then, circumstances proving favorable, such an ideology may be transformed from a thin stream in the coterie or academy into a mighty flood in the market and the forum, wherever people gather and form a concerted opinion for action.

In the meanwhile, we are glad to note that serious study of and investigation into Maithili is making steady progress. The impetus to Maithili studies came from the Calcutta University thirty years ago, when in 1919 Sir Asutosh Mookerjee of illustrious memory founded the Department of Modern Indian Languages ("Indian Vernaculars", as it was then called) and instituted the study for the M. A. examination of the major languages of India among which Maithili was given a place. This drew out from among Maithili scholars and lovers of Maithili the incipient interest in their

mother-tongue, and quite a prominent part was taken in the work of rehabilitating Maithili by Kumar Ganganand Sinha of Banaili and Pandit Khuddi Jha, Pandit Babua Misra Jyotishacharya, Babu Gangapati Sinha and other notable Maithili scholars. Following the example of the University of Calcutta, Maithili was given the status of a mother-tongue in the Universities of Patna and Banaras as well. The Maharaja of Darbhanga endowed a Chair of Maithili in the University of Patna; and the foundation of a Maithili Sahitya Parishad at Laheria Sarai, with Maithili Literary conferences presided over by the most prominent scholars of Mithila (like the late Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Ganganatha Jha of Allahabad, Dr. Amaranatha Jha, Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Umesha Mishra and others), brought in the necessary amount of publicity for Maithili and a certain amount of championing of its cause among the *intelligentsia* of Mithila, particularly among Maithili-speaking students in the University of Patna and elsewhere. Enthusiasts for Maithili like Mr. Bholalal Das of Laheria Sarai and others came forward to help the movement on both academic and social sides. Grammars of Maithili (some of them quite painstaking and involving a lot of original research) came to be published, as well as editions of old poets, and attempts to create a modern literature of original stories and novels, poems and dramas, essays and translations are now in evidence.

The first serious philological work on Maithili (taking *Philology* in its wide sense) was attempted by Pandit Babua Misra and the present writer in editing and publishing (from the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1940) the oldest genuine Maithili work so far available—the *Varnaratnakara* of Jyotiriśvara Th kura, which was written early in the 14th century. My

former pupil in the University of Calcutta, Dr. Subhadra Jha, then completed his historical grammar of Maithili (in 1946) which obtained for him the doctor's degree of the University of Patna. Prior to this he had published an elaborate study of the phonetics of Modern Maithili in 1941 (in the Journal *Indian Linguistics*, Bulletin of the Linguistic Society of India, Vol. VIII, Part I, Calcutta); and subsequently, as part of his academic work in Paris, Dr. Jha prepared a critical edition of the songs of Vidyapati from a unique Ms. preserved in Nepal. And now we have the present work from Dr. Jayakanta Misra, which is quite a pioneer in its field, being the first attempt to record the full history of the literary output in Maithili with the help of such materials as are now available for the earlier periods.

In Bengal, this progress of Maithili studies is watched with keen and sympathetic interest by a few people interested both in Bengali and Maithili. The cultural and intellectual ties between Mithila and Bengal have always been very close. Bengalis, after the conquest of their province by the Turks and the establishment of a Muslim state, found in Mithila and in Orissa two neighbouring lands with a Hindu *regime* and a Hindu culture retained intact, and to Mithila the best scholars of Bengal were in the habit of repairing for higher Sanskrit studies for some centuries after the Turki conquest. Five hundred years ago the language of Mithila and that of Bengal were much closer to each other: a thousand years ago these were very closely agreeing dialects, if not actually the same speech. A great Maithil poet, Vidyapati, had a host of imitators in Bengal (as well as in Assam and Orissa), and these imitators followed their master to the extent of imitating his Early Maithil speech in Bengal; and this resulted in the creation of an artificial mixture

of Maithili and Bengali into a special dialect for Vaishnava religious poetry, known in Bengal as the *Braja-buli*, in which Bengali poets from the second half of the 15th century down to our day have composed lyrics centering round the divine love of Radha and Krishna—Rabindranath Tagore himself having succumbed to the charms of this sweet Braja-buli speech and composed a whole series of poems (*Bhanu Sinha Thakurer Padavali*) in it. Slow y we have transformed Vidyapati into a poet of Bengal, even for a time forgetting that his home was Mithila—the poet's provenance was less important than his message and his music. Very fundamental changes have modified both Maithili and Bengali during the last five hundred years, but Old Maithili and Old Bengali were still mutually intelligible; and this tradition of the two speeches being closely knit is still strongly prevalent in Bengali, enabling us to retain our interest in Maithili.

Dr. Jayakanta Misra's work is one which is to be welcomed with open arms. It for the first time "puts on the map," so to say, by acquiring it for science, the literature of Maithili. Now we are in a position to take stock of what has been achieved in Maithili since its emergence as a New Indo-Aryan language. To get his facts, Dr. Jayakanta Misra has had to do quite a large amount of spade work: it is a record of his personal researches in many directions. The author is well-qualified for the work undertaken by him. He took his M.A. in English, and Sanskrit learning is his own by family tradition and culture. These are useful backgrounds for studying the literature of a modern Indian language. His acquaintance with English can only be expected to give him that balance and sense of values which only a modern European literature can impart to an Indian investigator.

Then, he has the requisite amount of love and enthusiasm for his subject. Without this warmth of love and enthusiasm (which may at times lead us to valuations or underlinings which may appear as a trifle exaggerated to dispassionate outsiders), any study is apt to become dry-as-dust and lifeless, unless in the hands of a master who has other great qualities as a set off. I have watched over Dr. Jayakanta's labours since their inception; and on the whole I feel very happy to give my cordial *imprimatur* to them.

It is obvious that in many matters there will not be perfect agreement among scholars. The language of the *Caryapadas* is a point in question. The fact the *Caryapadas* have been claimed for Old Assamese, Old Oriya, Old Maithili (and Old Magahi) as much as for Old Bengali, only demonstrates the close kinship of these languages to one another; they have even been claimed for "Old Hindi," taking "Hindi" in a loose and popular sense. Dr. Jayakanta Misra, like Dr. Subhadra Jha, thinks the *Caryas* are in Old Maithili. I still stick to my view, put forward in my *Origin and Development of the Bengali Language* (1926), that the *Caryas* were composed in Old Bengali—of course at a time when the divergences between Maithili and Bengali and Oriya and Assamese were not very prominent. Then, the occurrence of a Brajabuli literature in Bengali frequently confuses the identity of a particular writer. The poet Govindadasa is a case in point (pp. 234 ff.). I think Dr. Sukumar Sen has clearly indicated the existence of a Bengali Govindadasa in his *Vangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika* article referred to by Dr. Jayakanta Misra (in his footnote, p. 234). As a matter of fact, Govindadasa is a writer of Middle Bengali about whom and whose poetical career we have more definite contemporary evidence than about anybody else. To settle the vexed question as to

which of these two poets, one Maithili and the other Bengali, a particular composition is to be ascribed, we have got to go into proper textual criticism with both Bengali (Brajabuli) and Maithili materials : and the latter as a rule can always be asked to be produced in a disputed case like this.

Dr. Jayakanta Misra has given some preliminary chapters on "Mithila and her People," on "the Maithili Language and its Script" and on "Introducing Maithili Literature" (pp. 1—96). I think these will be useful for the ordinary reader also, as much as for the specialist. He would like to merge Magahi into Maithili as but a form or dialect of the latter. The agreements between these two speeches indeed are very close, but the sentiments of the Magahi speakers are to be considered in this connexion. In spite of some of the fundamental things (*e.g.* the matter of the incorporation of the object and the dative with the verb), the Magahi speakers appear to have a feeling that Maithili is a separate speech. This was my impression, in witnessing a folk-drama on the *Ramayana* in a village in the Magahi area, in which Rama's advent into Mithila with Vishwamitra and Lakshmana brought in a comic interlude—Maithili priests trying to persuade the princes to be their clients during their stay in the holy land of Mithila, and their use of *chi* and *chai* was always greeted with good-humoured laughter as at the ways of an uncouth dialect.

The solid parts of Dr. Jayakanta's work consist in his giving a chronological survey of the sequence of poets and other writers through the centuries, and in his full study of the Maithili drama and its ramifications in Nepal and Assam. The survey of Maithili literature in the modern period (20th century) which he has reserved for the second volume and that of the Folk Literature of Mithila also show a painstaking collec-

tion of facts and a discriminate and judicious ordering of them. The picture presented by his setting forth of Early Maithili literature in the present work is quite a convincing one, and it makes clear the presence of a common culture in Eastern India, embracing Mithila, Nepal, Assam, Bengal, and, to come extent Orissa, of which Maithili was a main vehicle. From the point of view of Maithili, it is sad to contemplate how the language has come down from this high pedestal. Doubtless behind the pre-eminence of Maithili four or five centuries ago there was the Sanskrit scholarship of the Maithila Brahmans, who while cultivating as their first inheritance the Language of the Gods did not neglect their mother-tongue.

I can now only wish Dr. Jayakanta's book god-speed, and I trust it will be possible to see the second volume follow quickly the first in coming to the light of day. I would have loved to see it better printed and better got up. But it is better as it is than that its publication should have been delayed indefinitely. I therefore commend it to the study of persons interested in the subject, as a piece of pioneer research work intelligently and sympathetically planned, conscientiously worked out and successfully terminated, as a book which has a great future possibility; and I welcome it for its solid worth and the place it has created for itself in modern Indian literature and philology.

The University, SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI
Calcutta
July 1, 1949.

PREFACE

Maithili is the mother-tongue of "all the Hindus and Muhammadans, who inhabit the great plain which is bounded on the North and South by the Himalayas and the Ganges, and on the East and West by the Kosī and the Gandak respectively." (Grierson, *Maithili Grammar*, p. 2) This area, collectively known as Mithila or Tirhut, lies in the North-East of India and is shown on the political map as North Bihar and South Nepal Terai.

Unfortunately this language has been much neglected, vilified and misrepresented during the last two generations. It has been sometimes classed as a dialect of its neighbouring languages — Hindi and Bengali — and, sometimes denied its independent existence even as a dialect. But in reality, as Sir George Grierson observed years ago, "Maithili *is* a language and not a dialect. It is the native language of more than seven and a quarter millions of people (*now at least thirteen millions*) of whom, as will be borne out by every official having experience of North Bihar, at least five millions can neither speak nor understand either Hindi or Urdu without the greatest difficulty. It differs from both Hindī and Bangālī both in vocabulary and in grammar, and is as much a distinct language from either of them as Marāthī or Uriyā. It is a country with its own traditions, its own poets, and its own pride in everythig belonging to itself." (*Maithili Grammar*, p. 2)

My primary aim in writing a History of Maithili Literature in the following pages has been to investigate and to establish the truth

of the above statement of the great philologist and scholar. I am happy to say at the end of my labours that even a small course of study as I undertook has more than amply confirmed his words.

Gradually as I proceeded with my enquiry I was overwhelmed by the extensive character of the material hitherto completely unexplored. No effort was spared to make the search as complete and thorough as possible within the time and with the resources available. In addition to my family collections, I had the privilege of using the libraries of the late Dr. Sir Gangānātha Jha, the University of Allahabad, the Allahabad Public Library, the Candra Pustakālaya of Mathura, the Bihar Research Society, the Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad of Darbhanga, the Editor of the *Mithilámihira*, the late Munshi Raghunandanadāsa of Sakhavāra, Babu Lakshmipati Singh of Madhepurā, the Raj Library of Darbhanga, State Library of Nepal, and Rājaguru Hemaraja Sharma of Nepal. Early in May 1946, I undertook a tour of Mithila and visited all places of cultural and literary interest. In September 1946 I made a journey to Nepal also and though my visit was very short, I consider it quite successful inasmuch as I discovered for the first time a number of Maithili works, including the valuable *Kamsanárâyaṇapaddávalí*. For biographical and historical information, I relied generally on such warks as Shyam Narayan Sinha's *History of Tirhut*, Wright's *History of Nepal*, MM. Parameśvara Jha's *Mithilá-tattva-vimarśa*, Tārācaraṇa Jha's *Prácína O Arvácína Vidvána*, the Pañjī records, VIDYÂKARA, VIBHUTI-ANKA, MITHILÂNKA, JAYANTI and various Ms Catalogues. I thus made every possible effort to study all relevant works and all facts for myself before I ventured to write about them. In this, my sole guide was the venerable

Mallinatha's words 'नामूलं लिख्यते किञ्चित् नानपेक्षितमुच्यते' (Neither do I write anything without basis nor do I speak anything which is not necessary).

An attempt to write on Maithili Literature on such a scale as the present was never made before. The previous attempts were either lists of Maithili works and authors or small Introductions to them. Among the former, the lists of Kavīśvara Candī Jha, Yadunātha Jha "Yaduvara", Prof. Gangāpati Sinha, Munshi Raghunandanadāsa, Babu Bholālāladāsa and Babu Lakshmīpati Singh, Shashinātha Chaudhari, Surendra Jha 'Sumana', Kulānandadāsa 'Nandana' and Jivanātha Jha 'Vidyābhūṣaṇa' may be mentioned. Grierson, Cetanātha Jha and Shyam Narayan Singh have made pioneer efforts to describe the gradual development of Maithili Literature. The Annual Reports and Addresses of such organisations as Maithilī Sāhitya Sabhā, Maithila Mahāsabhā and Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad, Darbhanga, have periodically surveyed the progress in contemporary literature. The works of Pandit Ramānātha Jha (*Maithilī Sāhitya-ka Itihāsa*), Dr. Subhadra Jha (Introduction to the *Formation of Maithili Language*), Surendra Jha 'Sumana' (*Maithilī-ka Unnāyaka*) and Dr. Umesha Mishra (Several essays in the *Hindustānī*) were the only serious efforts to study critically the achievement of Maithilī authors. Most of them, however, are inadequate, or slender. They leave various influences in the making of Maithilī Literature untouched and do not try to view it as a whole. It is, therefore, claimed that a work like the present one has never been written.

The division of Maithili Literature into three periods—1. Early Period (1300-1600), 2. Middle Period (1600-1860) and 3. New Period (1860 to the present day)—has been made from

the point of view of political events and their influence on the course of literary activities in Mithila. The philological and grammatical character of the language also shows this three-fold division. The first period (Early Maithili Literature) begins roughly in 1300 because it marks the coming of the Muhammadans to Eastern India. The results of their arrival were far-reaching and they left their indelible mark on the course of literary and social activities. Mithila somehow remained to be the sole refuge of Hindu scholarship and learning for at least three centuries. She made a bold stand to protect the culture and religion of the Hindus through Mimāṁsā, Dharmaśāstra and Nyāya studies. Under enlightened and peaceful Hindu courts, poetry and music flourished on an unprecedented scale in Mithila. This quiet was, however, occasionally disturbed by the Musalmān inroads. In 1527, when this period ends, the native courts were finally disbanded. This marks the end of the Oinivāra dynasty. The dominating type of literature cultivated in Maithili during the period was Lyric.

The second period commences in about 1557 when a new dynasty—the illustrious Khaṇḍavalākula—comes to power. But it is able to bring back the former glory of the Maithila court by about 1600 only. Once again scholarship, art and music flourish. The period ends with the downfall of the Khaṇḍavalākula in the last decade of the eighteenth century when the principality of Mithila is reduced to a mere zamindari by Lord Cornwallis.

The third period, however, does not begin till the Court of Wards comes to administer the Darbhanga Raj in 1860. It is then that New Mithila begins to shape itself. The new administrators not only improved the finances of the Raj but succeeded in wiping off the

last traces of the old order. The language and the script of the land was debarred from being used any longer in public life; the old methods of revenue administration were abolished; the new institutions and "progressive" measures were introduced and the efficiency of administration was increased by re-adjusting the old, and also by creating new, Districts. Their influence was neither wholly beneficial nor comprehensive but they generally helped in the acceleration of the pace of "modernization" of the land. Statistical accounts were prepared communications and transport were improved by modern methods like the telegraph and the railway, natural calamities were controlled, local self-government was introduced and above all "English" education was started.

Of course so far as the fate of Maithili was concerned it received a positive set-back by the coming of the new conditions since 1860. The story how this decline in her literary progress was checked through the coming in of the "English" Inflnence and its subsequent growth and development along "modern" lines is as interesting as that of its expanding popularity and glorious achievements during the Early and the Middle Periods. The IV Part of the present History describes this. It is being published as Volume II of this work as it has been planned and written rather differently. This period, however, has also been surveyed by my father Mahamahopadhyaya Dr. Umesha Mishra in *The Indian Literatures of Today* (A Symposium, published by the P. E. N. All-India Centre) under the caption "Maithili Literature 1900-1945".

In writing this History of Maithili Literature it has been sometimes found convenient to cross the chronological limits of the periods and to pursue the course of a particular

type to its connected limit. Thus, the history of the Kīrtaniyā Drama should stop at the latest at 1860 but it has been discussed up to about 1920 after which it is practically extinct.

The quotations in Indian lauguages have been all given in the Devanāgarī script and have been generally left untranslated for fear of augmenting the bulk of the work. Popular spellings of names have been usually adopted. In transliterating non-English words the generally accepted symbols have been used. The dates have been given in the Christian Era unless otherwise stated. The index and the bibliography will be given at the end of the II Volume.

The preparation of the present work has involved many disappointments and humiliations. In several cases people were not willing to show or to lend me their Mss or works. This sometimes prevented me from collecting more information. But this is a common experience. The more uncommon one is the contempt with which a worker on a "Modern Indian Language" is still looked upon by the high-browed scholars in India.

At the same time I acknowledge most sincerely the encouragement and co-operation, ungrudging help and sacrifice, extreme confidence and faith in my work which was extended to me by my numerous friends, well-wishers and teachers. I have tried to point out everywhere in the footnotes the particular help which they have rendered me, but if some have been inadvertently missed I tender my grateful apologies to them To each of those gentlemen and institutions who have helped me by giving valuable information and advice or by lending books, MSS and Journals and Magazines I am deeply grateful. In particular my teachers Professor Amaranatha Jha, M. A., D. Litt., F.R.S.L., Chairman of the Public Service Com-

mission U.P., who has also kindly written a Foreword to the work, and Professor S. C. Deb, M.A., Head of the Department of English Studies in the Allahabad University; my father Mm. Dr. Umesha Mishra, M. A. D., Litt. of the Allahabad University and my brothers have done everything to help me in the preparation of this work—from the planning of it to the final printing of it. It is needless to say that but for the kind help of all these, it could not have been possible for me to do whatever I could do in the limited time at my disposal. It is also my duty to thank H. H. the Maharaja of Nepal, the Rajaguru Pt. Hemaraja Sharma of Nepal and Shri Rudraraja Pandey (Principal Kathamandu College) for all the facilities that were afforded to me during my stay in Nepal.

I am deeply grateful to Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, M. A., D. Litt., F. R. A. S. B., Khaira Professor of Indian Linguistics and Phonetics and Head of the Department of Comparative Philology, Calcutta University, who not only throughout guided and inspired me but also approved the work when it was submitted for the degree of D. Phil. in the University of Allahabad—for having written an Introduction to this work.

In the end I should like to express my thanks to Shri M. K. Dikshit the Manager of the Dikshit Press for his co-operation in bringing out the work as soon as possible. I am no less conscious than he of the printing errors that have found their way into the book. The diacritical marks, whatever could be hurriedly brought to the press, were new for the men and the anxiety of the author to see the book published was goading them on to work in some of the worst hours of the day. Some mistakes are through oversight as much as through the

Printer's Devil—large parts of the proofs were seen in the absence of the author—and I have, therefore, given a a list of essential corrections at the end.

Department of English Studies,
The University, Allahabad
July 10, 1949

JAYAKANTA MISHRA

CONTENTS

PAGE

Foreword by Prof. Amaranatha Jha, M.A., D.Litt., LL.D. i

Introduction by Prof. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, M.A., D.Litt. ... ...

Preface xvii

List of Abbreviations xxvii

CHAPTER

PART I

THE BACKGROUND

I. MITHILA AND HER PEOPLE ... 1
The Boundaries of Mithila p. 1—The Various Names of Mithila p. 7 - The Area of Mithila p. 9—The Land of Mithila p. 10—Mithila the Home of Traditional Learning p. 14—Religious Life of Mithila p. 19—Hindus and Muslims of Mithila p. 24—Pañji and Kulinism of Mithila p. 26—Love of Music and the Drama p. 31—Conclusion p. 38. ...

II. THE MAITHILI LANGUAGE AND ITS SCRIPT 39
I. *The Maithili Language.* The Names of Maithili p. 39.—Area Where Spoken p. 40—The Number of Its Speakers p. 41—Place of Maithili in Modern Indian Languages p. 44—Maithili an Independent Language p. 47—Maithili and Bengali p. 49—Maithili and Assamese p. 50—Maithili and Oriyā p. 53—Maithili and "Bihari" p. 55—Maithili and Magahi p. 57—Maithili and Bhojpuri p. 59—Maithili and Hindi p. 64.
II. *The Maithili Script* (*Tirhutā*). Its Name p. 67—Its History p. 68—Some Peculiarities of Tirhuta p. 70.

YO:
Colle

PAGE

III. INTRODUCING MAITHILI LITERATURE 73

I. *Periods of Maithili Literature* p. 73.

II. *Types of Literature in Maithili*. Forms of Poetry p. 74—Forms of Prose p. 81—Forms of the Drama p. 82.

III. *Versification in Maithili* p. 83—Asaṅkīrṇa Rāgas p. 87—Saṅkīrṇa Rāgas p. 91—Mātrika Metres and Varṇavṛttaka Metres p. 96.

PART II

EARLY MAITHILI LITERATURE

IV. ANTIQUITY OF MAITHILI LITERATURE 99

I. *The Oldest Specimens* p. 99. The Language of the *Caryâs* p. 100—The Authors of the *Caryâs* p. 110—The *Caryâ* poems p. 116.

II. *The Varṇa-ratnâkara* p. 118. The date of Jyotirīśvara p. 119—The arrangement of the work p. 121—Its subject-matter p. 123—The beautiful and the terrible p. 124—The 'Bhāṭa' p. 126—The importance of the work p. 127.

III. *Other Proto-Maithili Remains* p. 128.

V. AGE OF VIDYAPATI THAKURA (1350-1450) 130

I. *Characteristics of the Age* p. 130.

II. *Vidyapati Thakura* p. 134—His Ancestors p. 134—His Life p. 138—His Works p. 146—Sanskrit works p. 146—Maithili Avahaṭṭha works p. 147—*Kīrttilatâ* p. 147—*Kīrtti-patâkâ* p. 151—Maithili Lyrics p. 153—Classification of the lyrics p. 153—Variety of experiences p. 154—Creator of visions of the Beautiful p. 154—Opposite sentiments in Vidyapati p. 155—Nature p. 156—Devotional poems p. 157—The Poetry of Vidyapati p. 158—Was he a Vaiṣṇava? p. 158—Sources of his inspiration p. 159—Influence of Sanskrit p. 162—His imagery p. 163—His poetic craftsmanship p. 164.

PAGE

III. *The Influence of Vidyapati Thakura* p. 165—In Mithila p. 165—In the Neighbouring Provinces p. 166—(1) Bengal p. 166—Brajabuli Literature p. 167—Jñanadasa p. 169—Govindadasa p. 169 Balaramadasa p. 170—Narottamadasa p. 171—Rayaśekhara p. 172—Modern revival of Brajabuli p. 172—Rabindranatha Tagore p. 172—Conclusion p. 176—(2) Assam p. 176—Difference between Bengali and Assamese Brajabuli Literatures p. 176—Assames Brajabuli Lyrics p. 177—the Baragits p. 177—the Ankera Gits p. 177—(3) Orissa p. 178—Ramananda Raya p. 179—Other Brajabuli poets in Orissa p 180—(4) Nepal p. 181.

IV. *Modern Appreciation of Vidyapati*, Vidyapati Criticism p. 182—Review of Work Done p. 185—His nationality p 185—His Date—His Ancestory and Life History—His Religious Views p. 186—Was he a Vaiṣṇava p. 187—His Authentic Padas p. 188—Aesthetic Estimate of Vidyapati p. 189—His portrait p. 190—His Language and Prosody p. 190—Conclusion p. 191.

VI. CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS OF VIDYAPATI (c. 1400—c. 1700) ... 193

I. *Introductory* p. 193—Anthologies of Lyric p 193—Anthologies of Music p. 196.

II. *Contemporaries of Vidya-ati* (c. 1400—c. 1527) p. 196—Amṛtakara p. 196—Chandrakala p. 198—Harapati p 200—Bhanu Kavi p. 201—Gajasiṁha p. 202—Rndradhara p. 204—Kaviraja (Bhikhari Miśra) p. 204—Daśavadhana (Thakura) p. 205—Viṣṇupuri p. 208—Yaśodhara p. 209—Kaviśekhara p. 209—Rajapaṇḍita p. 211—Catura Caturbhuja p. 211—Madhusūdana p. 212—Jivanatha p. 213—Lachaminarayaṇa p. 214—Gopinatha p. 214—Viranarayaṇa p. 216—Dhireśvara p. 216—Bhiṣma Kavi p. 217—Gaṅgadhara p. 218—Lakhiminatha p. 218—Śyamasundara p. 219—Kaṁsanarayaṇa p. 220—Govinda p. 221—Kaśinatha p. [illegible]—Ramanatha p. 223—Śridhara [illegible] clusion p. 224.

PAGE

III. *Successors of Vidyapati* (c. 1527—c. 1700) p. 225. In Mithila p. 226—Haridasa p. 226 —Maheśa Thakura p. 226—Bhagiratha Kavi p. 227—Mahinatha Thakura p. 228—Locana p. 228—Govindadasa p. 234—Minor poets p. 239—In Nepal p. 241—Siddhi Narasingha p. 241—Simha Bhupati p. 241—Śrinivasamalla p. 243—Nrpa Malladeva p. 243—Bhupatindra p. 244—Jagajjyotir-malla p. 246—Jagatprakaśamalla p. 246—Candraśekharasimha p. 247—Jitamitra p. 249—Ranajitmalla p. 249.

IV. *Conclusion* p. 249.

PART III

MIDDLE MAITHILI LITERATURE

VII. MAITHILI DRAMA IN NEPAL ... 253

I. *Introductory*. Origin of the Vernacular Drama p. 253—Beginnings of the Vernacular Drama in Mithila and the Circumstances Leading to Its Growth in Nepal p. 255.

II. *Characteristics of Maithili Drama in Nepal* p. 259.

III. *The Dramatists*. (A) At Bhatgaon p. 261—Viśvamalla p. 262—Tribhuvanamalla p. 263—Jagajjyotirmalla p. 263—Jagatprakaśa-malla p. 264—Jitamitramalla p. 266—Bhu-patindramalla p 267—Ranajitmalla p. 274—(B) At Kathamandu p. 278—(1) Rajas of Kantipura (Kathamandu) p. 278—Vamśamani Jha p 279—Mahindra(.Bhupalendra.)malla p. 280—Bhaskaramalla p. 281—(2) Rajas of Lalitapura (or Patana) p. 281—Siddhinara-singha-deva p. 282—Śrinivasamalla p. 284—Visnusimhamalla p. 284—(C) At Banikapura or Vanepa p. 284 - Jayaramadatta p. 284.

IV. *Conclusion* p. 285—Unclassified dramas p. 285—The Influences working during the period p. 286.

VIII. THE KIRTANIYA DRAMA OF MI-THILA 287

I. *Introductory* p. 287—Conditions of the stage p. 287.

PAGE

II. *The Dramatists* p. 292—Vidyāpati p. 292—Govinda p 293—Rāmadāsa Jha p. 296—Devānanda p. 299—Umāpati Upādhyāya p. 301—Ramāpati Upādhyāya p. 311—Lāla Kavi p. 318—Nandīpati p. 321—Gokulānanda p. 328 Śivadatta p. 329—Jayānanda p. 333—Śrikānta Gaṇaka p. 334—Kānharāma p. 336—Ratnapāṇi p. 341—Bhānunātha Jha p. 347—Harṣanātha Jha p. 349—Viśvanātha Jha p. 353—Candā Jha p. 354—Baladeva Mishra 356.

III. *Conclusion* p. 357—Characteristics of the Kirtaniyā drama p. 357.

IX. MAITHILI DRAMA IN ASSAM ... 360

I. *Introductory—Its Origin* p 360.

II *The Leading Dramatists* p. 363—Śankaradeva p. 363—Mādhavadeva p. 367—Gopāladeva p. 371—Rāmacarana Thākura p. 371.

III. *The Minor Dramatists* p. 372.

IV. *Characteristics of Maithili Drama in Assam* p. 372—Name p. 373—General p. 373—Structure p. 374—Their Achievement p. 377—Final Estimate p. 378.

X MIDDLE MAITHILI PROSE ... 380

I. *Documentary Prose* p. 380 Service deeds or contracts p. 381—The Gaurtva-caṭikāpatra p. 382—The Bahikhata p. 385—The Ajātapatra p. 387—The Akarārapatra p. 387—The Janauḍhi p. 388—The Nistārapatra p. 389—Grant deeds p. 390—Judgments and Other State Papers p. 393—Letters p 396—Conclusion p. 397.

II. *Prose in the Dramas* p. 397

XI MIDDLE MAITHILI POETRY ... 402

I *Introductory*. The Decline of the Khaṇḍavalākula p. 402.—Middle Maithili Poetry p. 404.

I. *Lyrical Poetry* p. 407—Kaviśekhara Bhañjana p. 407—Buddhilāla p. 408—Rāmeśvara p. 409—"Nidhi" p. 410—Lāla Kavi p. 410—Ramāpati Upādhyāya p. 411—Keśava p. 412—Modanārāyaṇa p. 414—Harinātha p. 414—Mādhava p. 415—Śrīpati p. 415—Mahīpati

PAGE

p. 416—Caturbhuja p. 416—Cakrapāṇi p. 417—Maṅganīrāma Jha p. 418—Manabodha p 418—Veṇīdatta Jha p. 418—Nandīpati Jha p. 498—Jayānanda p. 418—Kulapati p. 418 Kṛṣṇapati or Kṛṣṇa Kavi p. 419—Kṛṣṇadatta p. 419—Karaṇa Śyāma p. 427—Ratnapāṇi Jha p. 429—Jayakṛṣṇa p. 430—Babujana p. 431—Bhānunātha Jha p. 432—"Ādinātha" p. 432—Fatura Kavi p. 433—Harṣanātha Jha p. 433—Karnāṭa p. 433—Viśvanātha p. 433—Raghunandana p. 433—Bhīmadatta Jha p. 433—Modanātha p. 433—Jīvanātha p. 437—Candranātha p. 437—Durmila p. 437—Sukavi Gaṇaka p. 437—Anonymous and minor poets p. 438—Saint-poets p. 441—Sahebarāmadāsa p. 442—Lakṣmīnātha Gosāñi p. 447—Rāmarūpadāsa p. 449—Harikiṅkaradāsa p. 449—Paramānandadāsa p 449—Jayadeva Svāmī p. 450.

II. *Long Poems* p. 450—Translations p 450—Ratipati p. 450—Manabodha p. 4 2—Vaidyanātha p. 456—Gaṅgādāsa p. 457—Durgādatta Miśra p. 457—Sammaras and Caritas p 457—Cakrapāṇi p. 457—Anonymous p. 457—Śivadatta p. 458—Anonymous p. 459—*Gītadaśāvatāra* p. 463—Miscellaneous Works in Verse p 461—Unclassified Poetical Works p. 461.

III. *Conclusion* p. 462.

APPENDIX 464

I. The Karṇāṭa Dynasty p. 46¹.

II. The Oinivārs p. 465.

III. The Khaṇḍavalakula p. 467.

ERRATA 469

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MAP OF MAITHILI AREA ... Facing 1

MAITHILI SCRIPT (TIRHUTĀ) AND SOME OTHER SCRIPTS ... ... Facing 68

LAST PAGE OF *VARṆARATNĀKARA* Facing 118

VIDYĀPATI'S HANDWRITING ... Facing 142

LOCANA'S HANDWRITING ... Facing 230

VIDYĀPATI'S *GORAKṢAVIJAYA-NĀṬAKA* ·Facing 292

LAST PAGE OF RATIPATI'S *GITAGOVINDA* Facing 450

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

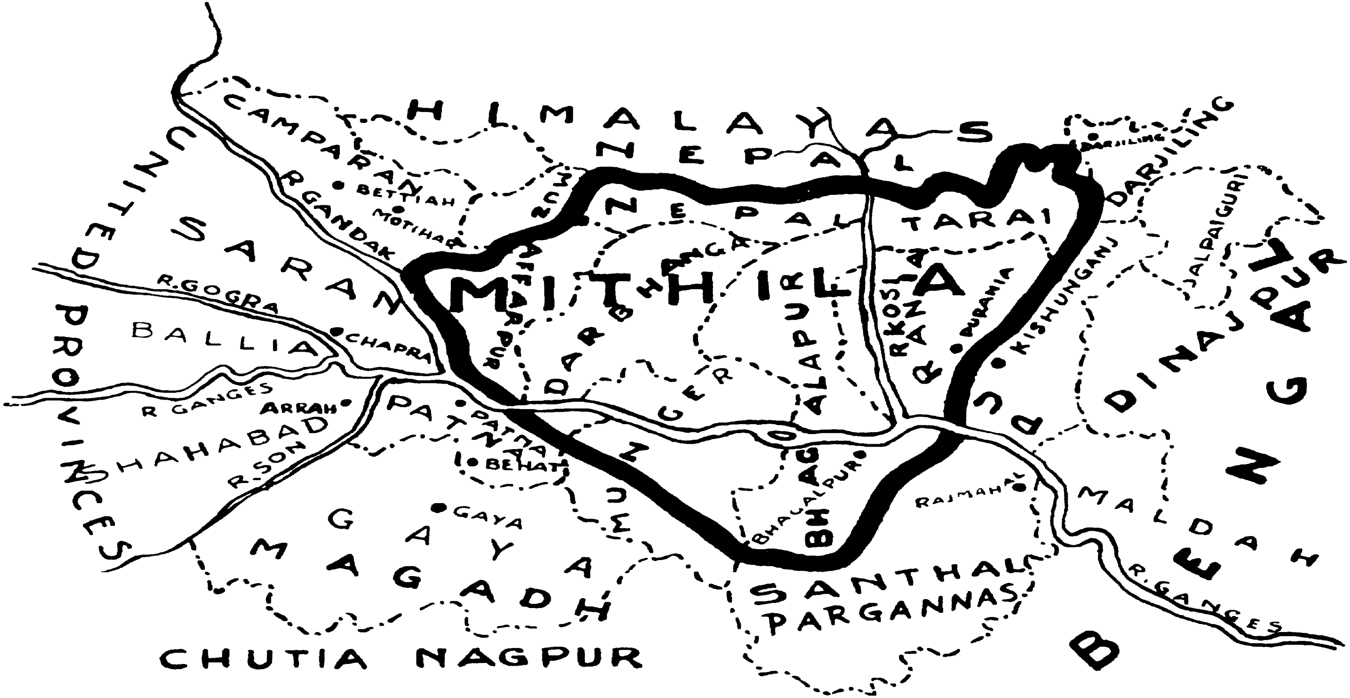
ABORI = Annals of Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Poona.
BAKHŚI = Mithilābhāṣāmaya Khaṇḍavalākula Itihāsa by MM. Mukunda Jha Bakhśī.
BHĀṢĀ (GITA) MS A = Bhāṣāsangīta, collection of Maithilī songs by Bhupatīndra in Darbar Library, Nepal.
BHAṢĀ (GITA) MS B = Ibid, in the Library of Rajagūru Hemarāja Sharma, Nepal
Caryā = Caryāpadas (several editions).
Chatterji = See below ODBL.
Dbg. = Darbhanga.
Dist. Gaz. = District Gazetteers of India.
Ed., Edn. = Edited by, Editor, or Edition
GAJ MS = Gajahara MS described in Part III, Chapter XI, p. 406.
History of Bengal = Published by the Dacca University.
IA = Indian Antiquary.
J(R)ASB = Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, Bengal.
JAYANTI = Rāmalocana Śaraṇa Jubilee Volume, Pustaka-bhandara, Laheriāserai, 1937.
JB(O)RS = Journal of Bihar (and Orissa) Research Society, Patna
JGRI = Journal of Ganganatha Jha Research Institute, Allahabad.
JHA COM = Jha Commemoration volume, Poona Oriental Agency, Poona.
JKAMARUPA = Journal of Kāmarūpa Anusandhāna Samiti.
JRAS = Journal of Royal Asiatic Society, London.
KANE = History of Dharma-śāstra by MM P. V. Kane, Poona.
KNP = Kaṁsanārāyaṇapadāvalī.
LSI = Linguistic Survey of India.
MANGARAUNI MS = Described in Part III, Chapter XI p. 405.
Mehta = Pre-Buddhist India by Ratilala Mehta, Indian Historical Records Commission.
MGS = Mithilā Gīta Sangraha, (4 parts), Darbhanga.
MITHILANKA—Special number, Mithilāmihira, 1935, Darbhanga,
Mihira = Mithilāmihira, Darbhanga.
MODA = Mithilāmoda, Benares.
MMC = Mithila MS Catalogue, Published by the Bihar Research Society, Patna.

MS or MSS = Manuscript(s).
N = Nepal MS of Vidyāpati-Padavali.
Nep(al) Cat. = Catalogue of Palm-leaf MSS in the Durbar Library, Ed. Haraprasāda Śāstrī with introduction by Bendal.
N. G. or N. Gupta = Nagendranatha Gupta's edition of Vidyapati Padāvalī.
OCP or POC = Proceedings of All-India Oriental Conference.
ODBL or OBDL = Origin and Development of the Bengali Language by Dr. S. K. Chatterji.
Pariṣad or Sāhitya Pariṣad = Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad Darbhanga.
P.E.N. = Indian Literatures of Today, published hy the All-India P.E N. Centre, Bombay. Esp. pp. 71-87.
RAJ MS = Raj Library (Darbhanga) MS of Vidyapati, Ed. R. Jha.
RAYACHAUDHURY = Political History of Ancient India by Rayachaudhury.
RT = Rāgataraṅgiṇī by Locana, Dbg. Edn.
S = Rāmabhadrapura Palm leaf MS of Vidyāpati.
SINGH = History of Tirhut by Shyam Narayan Singh, 1922, Calcutta.
TPMS = Tarauni Palm-Leaf MS of Vidyāpati-Padāvalī.
Tr. = Translation.
VIBHUTI ANKA = Special number of Maithilabandhu, (Ajmer) Vol. VII, No. 1,
VIDYAKARA = Vidyākarasāhasrakaṁ Ed. Dr. U, Mishra.
VIŚVANĀTHA KAVI'S MS = See p 353 f. n 72.
IHQ = Indian Historical Quarterly, Calcutta.
Z D.M.G. = Zeitschrift Deutschen Morgenlandischen Gesellschaft, Leipzig.

PART I

The Background

MAP OF MAITHILI SPEAKING AREA



Courtsey XIV All-India Oriental Conference]

[Based on Grierson's Map in "Bihari Grammers"

CHAPTER I

MITHILA AND HER PEOPLE

जाता सा यत्र सीता सरिदमलजला वाग्वती यत्र पुण्या ।
यत्रास्ते सन्निधाने सुरनगरनदी भैरवो यत्र लिङ्गम् ।
मीमांसा-न्याय-वेदाध्ययन-पटुतरैः पण्डितैर्मण्डिता या ।
भूदेवो यत्र भूपो यजनवसुमती सास्ति मे तीरभुक्तिः ॥[1]

The Boundaries of Mithila

According to the *Brhad-Visnu-Purána*[2] (c. 5th century), Mithila is the country which is surrounded by the Kauśikı river on the East, by the Gaṇḍakī on the West, by the Gaṅgā on the South and by the Himalaya on the North.[3] This area is represented today by the districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Champaran, (North) Monghyr, (North) Bhagalpur and parts of Purnea

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1. Anonymous Traditional Verse, quoted in VIDYAKARA, p. 147.

2. *Mithılâ (Mâhâtmya) Khaṇḍa*, the dialogue between Parāśara and Maitreyī, Chapter XIV, of the *Bṛhad-Viṣṇupurâṇa*. Published from Benares. Though *Vıṣṇupurâṇa* has been traced back to the beginning of the Christian Era (IHQ VII, pp. 370-71), yet the *Bṛhad-Vıṣṇupurâṇa* cannot be dated earlier than the 5th century (cf. SINGH, p. 2, n. 2, and Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Traditions*, p. 80).

3. Candā Jha translated these very boundaries in his oft-quoted lines—

गंगा बहथि जनिक दक्षिणदिशि पूर्व कौशिकी धारा ।
पश्चिम बहथि गंडकी उत्तर हिमवत बल विस्तारा ॥
कमला त्रियुगा अमृ(नृ)ता धेमुड़ा वागमती कृतसारा ।
मध्य बहथि लक्ष्मणा प्रभृति से मिथिला विद्यागारा ॥

(SINGH, p. 3 and "Mithilāvarṇana" in *Maithila Prabhâ* II, No. 11-12, p. 17.)

in India, and those of Rautāhat, Saralāhī, Saptarī, Mohatarī and Morang in the Kingdom of Nepal.

The earliest reference to the boundaries of the country occurs in the *Satapatha-Brāhmana* (roughly 1000 - 600 B. C.). It is mentioned there that the river Sadānīrā divided the Kingdoms of Videha and Kośala. The proper identification of the Sadānīrā has been very much disputed; it may be an old name of the Gaṇḍaka or of the Rāptī, but not of the Karatoyā in modern Bengal.

Early references to Mithila indicate that the country lay towards the Himālaya and that it did not extend in the South as far as the Gaṅgā during the early period. *Skanda-Purāna* and other works do not mention the Gaṅgā as her boundary.

The Purāṇas and the Epics, however, reveal that what we understand today as Mithila was first connotated by 'Videha' which was a comprehensive name of the country and included several kingdoms in it and of which the most important were those of Mithila and Vaiśālī.

There are one or two stray references in the Buddhist works which seem to show that the province of Videha was situated in the tract of land called Madhyadeśa. It is likely that "the Buddhists extended the connotation of Madhyadeśa *(traditionally regarded as the sacred part of India)* simply because they had to include in it the lands par excellence of Buddhism, viz., Bodh Gaya and Banaras."[4] Indeed, Dr. B. C. Law quotes from the *Divyāvadāna* to show that they extended the "eastern

4. Dr. B. C. Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, p. 1, 2. Published by the author, Calcutta. (In the quotation the italicised clause is ours.)

boundary of *Majjhimadesa* still farther to the east so as to include Pundavardhana which in ancient times included Varendra (North Bengal)."

All Brahmanical works agree in placing the Eastern boundary of Madhyadeśa somewhere near Prayāga.[6] Mithila appears to have been excluded from the four ancient sacred divisions of the country—Brahmāvarta, Brahmarṣideśa, Madhyadeśa and Āryāvarta—and acquired sanctity only from the fact that there roamed about the black antelope in Mithila.[7] That is the reason why the *Yájnavalkya-Smṛti* is careful to point out that the path of Duty was revealed by the sage of Mithila, Yājñavalkya, "in that country in which the black antelope roams about."[8] Fa-hien (c. 5th century) considers Madhyadeśa to lie round about Mathura; Alberuni (c. 13th century) expressly refers to it as the country around Kanauj. Certain linguistic nomenclatures confirm that Mithila was not considered to be situated in Madhyadeśa. Locana's *Rágatarangini* (mid-17th century) distinguishes Maithili, the language of Mithila, from "Madhyadeśa-bhāṣā", the language of Madhyadeśa; and the name Madhesi (=a Madhyadeśīya speech) is used to distinguish itself from the language of

5. Ibid.

6. Dr. Dhirendra Verma brings this out in "Madhyadeśa Kā Vikāsa" (in *Vicāradhārā*) from Aitareva Brāhmaṇa (38.3), Manusmṛti (II. 21), Rajaśekhara's Kavyamīmāṁsā, (p. 93) Trikāṇḍa-Kośa (2.196). Abhidhāna Cintāmaṇi (Verse 951), Amarakośa (III 1 vii), Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa (57.33), Vṛhat-Saṁhitā (Chapter XIV) and Mahābhārata (Vide—JRAS-1908, p. 326). Majumdar in the introduction to *Cunningham's Ancient Geography of India* (p. xli), supports this. Also see Fahien (Vide—RAYACHOUDHURI p. 469), and Alberuni (I, xviii), *Indian Culture* (VII. 2) and JGJRI (August 1944) and J. Mishra, *Sunday Leader* (August 1944).

7. Cf. Aparārka, p. 5 quoted by KANE II, 1, p. 14ff.

8. Verse 2.

Mithila which is also known in the district of Champaran. Indeed, far from being included in Madhyadeśa (Mid-land), Mithila was consistently regarded as a member of the Prācya-deśa (Eastern country). In this connection it may be pointed out that "Prācī in Ancient Tibetan Geography excluded Magadha, Kāśī and Kośala, but included Mithilā and Aṅga." (*Indian Culture*, VII. 2).

The Eastern Boundary of Mithila has been fluctuating with the variations in the course of the river Kośī. There is no doubt that the Kośī formerly flowed far to the east of its present course. "The references in the epics are too vague to enable us to ascertain the exact position of the mouth of the river." There is evidence to prove the fact that from as early as the 7th century to about 1600 the Kośi formed the common boundary of the provinces of Kāmarūpa and Mithila, The lands donated by the Nidhanpur charter in c. 7th century lay in East Mithila. Rightly Shri K. K. Barua says: "I hold that probably prior to c. 554 A. D., Mahabhutavarman crossed the Karatoya and conquered a part of Eastern Mithila and Morang and in order to commemorate his conquests made the grant of lands within the conquered area to Brahmanas—Bhaskarvarman acquired it (once more) in the first quarter of the 7th century and he issued a charter confirming the grant made by his ancestor, Mahabhutivarman."[9]

By the Fourth and Fifth Centuries the kingdoms of Videha, such as, those of Vaiśālī and Mithila, seem to have been united under a larger Republican unit, and formed themselves into the Province of Tīrabhukti (cf. the names of the contemporary provinces of

9. See JKAMARUPA, II 3 and II 4 and also *Indian Culture*, I. p. 421-431.

Jeja-Bhukti, Puṇḍravardhanabhukti and other Bhuktis). The Province was bounded by three *tiras* (river-banks)—those of the Gaṇḍaka, the Kośī and the Gaṅgā.[10]

The Province of Tīrabhukti had, unlike the more ancient Province of Videha, its southern boundary very clearly marked out in the river Gaṅgā. It continued to be so till about 1600 as is evidenced by the boundaries of the Province given in the *Saktisangamatantra* (c. 1581)[11] and in the Sanad said to have been granted by the Moghul Emperor to Maharaja Maheśa Thākura (?1556).[12]

"Under the Moghal Empire Tirhut formed a *Sarkar* or division of the *subah* or province of Bihar. It comprised a very large tract of country being bounded on the north by Sarkars Hajipur, Monghyr and Purnea. In other words, it included the present districts of Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga (except the southern portion which was included in Sarkar Hajipur) nearly whole of Bhagalpur and a small portion of Monghyr. In the early days of British administration, it formed a huge district, covering the present districts of Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga, large part of Bhagalpur, pargana *Kashmar* in the south-east corner of Saran, and pargana Bhadi Bhusari in the south-western corner of Monghyr. The headquarters of the district remained at Muzaffarpur, but various transfers of territory were made until the area of Tirhut coincided with that of Muzaffarpur and Darbhanga. It was divided into two in 1875, the eastern and larger portion being

10. SINGH, p. 5.

11. Baroda Ed. Vol. I, Intr. p. vii and SINGH, p. 2, f.n. 2 where other references are given.

12. SINGH, p. 212 f. n. 1, quotes a traditional verse—"Azgang-tā-Sang: Az-Kosa-tā-Ghose." See also *District Gaz.* (*Purnea*) p. 6, and JHA OOM p. 380 and *Purnea Settlement Report* (1901-08) Ed. 1901, App. VI, p. xlvi.

formed into the district of Darbhanga and the western portion being constituted the district of Muzaffarpur". The northernmost portions lying beyond the Moghul or British boundaries, it is needless to point out, have been under the Nepalese rulers.

Geographically, therefore, the boundaries of Mithila have passed through at least four stages. At first, there was the Province of Videha, of which the two important kingdoms were those of Vaiśālī and Mithila. Then, there grew up the Province of Tīrabhukti The third stage saw the disintegration of this and the incorporation of the Republic, along with Magadha, in the Subah of Bihar. Lastly, this was chiselled out and the modern revenue division of Tirhut (consisting of the districts of Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Champaran and Saran) is all that reminds us of the Ancient boundaries of Mithila.

Linguistically, however, she not only includes almost the entire area of Ancient and Medieval Mithila but has even gone beyond it. Grierson noticed this as early as 1881 in the following words:

> "The language of Ancient Mithila has been encroached upon in recent past by Bhojpuri in the West and it has in revenge crossed the Ganges and occupied North Patna and so much of the Monghyr and Bhagalpur districts as lie to the south of that river. It has also crossed the Kosi and occupied Purnea."[13]

Speaking from the point of view of culture, changes in her boundaries were recorded by Babu Ramalochana Sharan in 1939, and it has been claimed that parts of Santhal Parganas Manabhum and Dinajpur districts are under the influence of Mithila-Maithili area.[14]

13. Grierson, *Bihari Grammars*, Introduction, p. 16.

14. See Ramalochana Sharana, "Mithilaka Sāṁskritika sīmā" (*Mihira*, āśvina 1846 śāla, Udaya 32, Kiraṇa 1,

The various names of Mithila

There are twelve names of Mithila given in the *Brhad-Visnu-Purána.*[15] Most of these are mere descriptive epithets. The most widely used names are 'Videha', 'Mithila' and 'Tirabhukti' (Tirhut). The earliest one of these, was undoubtedly 'Videha'. It is derived from the name of King Videgha Mathava who is said to have brought *Agni* into the land and to have founded the Videhan dynasty.[16]

'Mithila' is not a name found in the Vedas, and even later literature[17] sparingly mentions it for the whole country. Mithila is described as the Capital city of Videha.[18]

pp. 9-11) and the letter from Upendra Jha Vyasa (*Mithira*, Feb 5, 1944). See also Chapter II *infra*.

15. SINGH, p. 4, f. n. 5

मिथिला तैरभुक्तिश्च वैदेही नैमिकाननम् ।
ज्ञानशीलं कृपापीठं स्वर्णलाङ्गलपद्धतिः ॥
जानकीजन्मभूमिश्च निरपेक्षा विकल्मषा ।
रामानन्दकरी विश्वभावनी नित्यमङ्गला ॥
इति द्वादश नामानि मिथिलायाः ॥

16. *Satapatha-Brâhmana* I, 4. i, (one of the latest Brāhmanas roughly dated 1000-600 B. C.) quoted from *Sacred Books of the East XII*, pp. 104-6 by B. C. Law in *Tribes in Ancient India*, p. 234. See also RAYACHOUDHURI, p. 46, Pargiter JASB 1897, p. 87 ff., *Vedic Index*, II p. 279, Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 398-99, and Macdonell, *Sanskrit Literature*, pp. 214-15. Some scholars are inclined to think that the origin of the name Mithila was the title 'Māthava' of this king (by finding 'Mithi' to be a reminiscence of it; see RAYACHOUDHURI p. 46 and Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India*, pp. 46-47).

17. E.g., *Râmâyaṇa*, *Mahâbhârata*, *Bhâgavata-Purâṇa*, *Daśakumâracarita*, *Raghuvaṁśa*, *Prasannarâghava*, etc.

18. See Cunningham's *Ancient Geography of India*, pp. 446-7. This city is identified with modern Janakapur in Nepal, see JHA COM, p. 385 ff. Also see Ratilala Mehta, *Pre-Buddhist India*, p. 46, B. C. Law, *Tribes in Ancient India*, pp. 239-40 and RAYACHOUDHURI, pp. 44-45.

The name seems to have originated from its founder, king Mithi.[19] Some ingenious commentators find the letters 'म' 'थ' 'ल' to represent 'जन्म' 'स्थिति' 'लय' ('birth' 'existence' 'death') respectively.[20] The most reasonable explanation is given by Pāṇinī[21] in the *Uaṇádi-Sútras.* He derives it from $\sqrt{manth}$ (to churn) and explains it thus: मथ्यन्तेऽत्र रिपवो मिथिला नगरी[22] (the city is known as Mithila since here enemies are tormented; cf. the name Ayodhya.[23]) Dr Subhadra Jha,[24] however, conjectures the word to be connected with '*Mitha*' (together) and thinks that 'Mithila' represents that part of the country which is made up of not less than three ancient provinces, namely, Vaiśāli, Videha and Aṅga. This does not seem to be correct for then the name 'Mithila' could never have been applied to a city merely. It seems that the Pāṇinian explanation is the soundest and, that, the name 'Mithila' was at first applied to a particular city or locality only; it came to mean a large area at a later date.

'Tīrabhukti' is undoubtedly a later name. There is no mention of it in the Vedas and the

19. See *Râmâyaṇa* and numerous Purâṇas. Cf. B. C. Law (*Tribes in Ancient India*, p. 238) who quotes *Bhâgavata Purâṇa*, IX 24, 64 and IX 13, *Viṣṇupurâṇa*, p. 388 ff. and *Bhaviṣya Purâṇa* Also see Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Traditions*, (p. 96) which quotes *Brâhma Purâṇa*, III. 64.6 and *Vâyu Purâṇa*, 89. 6 and *Mithilâ-Mâhâtmya-khaṇḍa* of the *Bṛhad Viṣṇupurâṇa*, p. 9, Adhyāya 18, śl. 6 ff.

20. Shashinatha Chaudhari, *Mithilâ-Darśana*, p. 2 f. n. 1.

21. It is not certain if Śakaṭāyana or Pāṇini is the author; see Belvalkar, *Systems of Sanskrit Grammar*, pp. 25-27.

22. *Siddhântakaumudî* by Bhattoji Dikṣita, Trichonopoly, 191 , I. 57.

23. JHA COM, p. 378.

24. *Formation of Maithili Language*, Introduction.

Epics and in the older Purāṇas. It came to be used in *Bhaviṣya-Purāṇa*, *Bṛhad-Viṣṇu-Purāṇa*, (Vāmana's) *Lingānuśāsana* and *Śaktisangama-tantra*. The earliest datable reference to it is found in the seals of Basarh (4th century).[25] The significance of the name is very disputed, but the most reasonable explanation seems to be that supported by Cunningham: 'Tīra' refers to the numerous 'river-banks' (*tīras*) in the country.[26] The numerous rivers of Mithila played so important a part in the country's geography and everyday life that a name after them was fully justified. The present form 'Tirhut' appears to have evolved like भारहुत from भारभुक्ति (तीरभुक्ति > तिरहुत, तीरहुत)

The Area of Mithila[27]

The dimensions of Mithila as given in the Puraṇas are: East to West 96 Kośas and North to South 64 Kośas (=6,144 sq. Kośas or about 12,500 sq. miles).[28] The actual area of Ancient Mithila is, however, about 19,275 sq. miles within Indian frontiers and about 10,000 sq. miles in the Kingdom of Nepal.

The area of Maithili speaking districts (excluding almost the whole of Champaran, and including South Monghyr, South Baghalpur, North Patna and parts of Purnea and Santhal Parganas) is also about 30,000 sq. miles. It may be pointed out that, of a total area of 69,745 sq. miles which constitute the modern province of Bihar:

Maithili speaking area covers = c. 20,000 sq. miles.

25. SINGH, p. 5.

26. Cunningham's *Archaeological Survey of India Report XVI* (quoted by SINGH, *Darbhanga District Gazetteer* and *Muzaffarpur District Gazetteer*), and Vincent Smith's *Early History of India*, (3rd Ed), pp 263 and 360 f. n. 1, and also SINGH, p. 5.

27 For the figures given in this section I have relied on the Census Report of India (1941) and the LSI.

28. *Mithilāmāhātmyakhaṇḍa*, Chapter XIII.

Magahi speaking area	= c. 10,000 sq. miles.
Chotanagpur aborginal area	= c. 20,000 ,,
Bhojpuri speaking area	= c. 9,750 ,,

The Land of Mithila

Prior to the Earthquake of 1934, Mithila was considered to be one of the most fertile and densely populated parts of India. The nature of the land has been described thus: "The country lies on a low level, in many places indented with chains of shallow marshes, marking the lines of drainage by which the local rainfall and the overflow of the hill streams which intersect the districts find their way southwards into the Ganges. The rivers flow on raised beds, which they have gradually constructed for themselves out of the silt brought down from the mountains in Nepal. The alluvial plain, diversified only by these river ridges is rich in all sorts of crops. In some tracts nothing but an enormous stretch of rice fields meets the eye, but in others the level plain is dotted with numerous clusters of bamboos and groves of mango and *siso* trees."[29]

The rivers are very important in the country. The leading rivers are: the Gaṅgā (particularly at Simaria Ghat) where lakhs of people assemble on all important bathing days; the Būḍha Gaṇḍaka which is still a valuable trade highway; the Kamalā-Trijugā group which includes the Bāgmatī, the Karai, the little Bāgmatī on which the metropolis of Mithila is situated; the Bhutahī Balan which is dreaded for its fickle floods; the Kamalā which is worshipped as the younger sister of the Gaṅgā; and lastly, the Kauśikī (formed by the confluence of seven streams in the East of Nepal in a tract called the Sapta-Kauśikī) which starting from the Varāha-Kṣetra brings about great destruction of life and property every year. The *Bṛhad-*

29. *Darbhanga District Gazetteer*, p. 2.

Visnu-Purána gives the names of several other rivers that are sometimes difficult to be identified to-day.[30] Indeed, all the chief ancient places of interest in the country are situated on the banks of the little Gaṇḍaka which must have been the channel of the Great Gaṇḍaka until the Seventh century. The first authentic description we have of the country, in the *Satapatha Bráhmana*,[31] says that the land beyond the Sadānīrā[32] appeared to the Brāhmaṇas very uncultivated and marshy and that nobody went across the stream before Videgha Māthava's arrival. It was on the arrival of the latter that the land was dried up, cultivated and made liveable by the Fire-God. The *Mahábhárata*[33] also calls the country "Jalodbhava" (*lit.* land reclaimed from swamp). Besides the numerous rivers, there are several lakes and ponds formed either by the heavy rains or by the floods or independently being dug by religious Maithila kings and inhabitants, which have created a vast low-lying plain. It has been rightly said that Mithila is

> "mainly a vast chain of temporary lakes, joined together by the numerous beds of the hill-streams which pass...on their way from Nepal to the Ganges. Large tracts in this area do not dry up till well on in the cold weather and in some places

30. The names of the ancient rivers as given in *Mithilâmâhâtmyakhaṇḍa* are: Kauśikī, Kamalā, Vilvavatī, Jīvacha, Balāna, Bhūyasī, Gairika, Dugdhavati, Vyāghravati, Virajā, Madanā (Maṇḍanā), Icchāmatī (Ikṣumatī), Lakṣmaṇā, Vāgmatī, Gaṇḍaki (Śālagrāmi) Tiljugā (Triyugā), Jīvāyikā, Yamunī, Haridrā, Panu Amaya (Ankukṣī Soni), Arddhavarā (Adhivarini), Vanaghośa(?), Dhūmrā (Dhemurā), Ghoṣavati(?) etc.

31. *Satapatha Brâhmaṇa*, I. 4. i.

32. Sadānīrā has been identified with Gaṇḍakī, Karatoyā or Rapti, see RAYACHOUDHURI, p. 44.

33. RAYACHOUDHURI, p. 216 f. n. Note, the expression "Udakadeśāt" for Kumārila Miśra's home land. (Cf. *Critical Bibliography of Pūrva Mīmâṁsâ*, p. 23.)

communications are open for only three or four months of the year."[34]

In the opinion of some people the earthquake of 1934 was most disastrous in Mithila owing to this character of her land.

There is hardly any mountain below the Terai areas. Dense forests abound in the North and wild animals were not unknown in plains till recently. With the growth of population, the advance of cultivation and the extension of means of communication they have now been driven back to the jungles of Nepal; 'and (now) there is no jungle left sufficiently large and dense to provide shelter for the larger beasts of prey'.[35]

The big *caoras* (चऔरs) are a peculiarity of Mithila. They are large open tracts of shallow and moist land, covered by bushes and large grass, where water usually gathers. They are infested with birds, and anglers find plenty of pleasure by their side. Paddy crops are said to grow in abundance in these *caoras*.

The climate has of late become malarial, but generally it is cool and healthy. The year is divided into three well-defined periods; the cold weather, the hot weather and the rainy season. The period from October to the end of May is very delightful.

Agriculture is the most important thing here. The main sources of supply of water are rainfall and streams. "If the monsoon is up to its normal strength, and the rain is timely and well-distributed, it admirably serves the purpose of the agricultural system generally practised. The main crop is winter rice, which covers over

34. *Darbhanga District Gazetteer*, p. 2. The river-side is so common that the expression "*nadī-dīsa*" is used for going out for nature's call. See BAKHŚI, p. 1, f. n. 2.

35. *Darbhanga District Gazetteer*, p. 3.

three-fifths of the cropped area."[36] Mithila has so many streams and streamlets besides heavy floods that there is very little scope for artificial irrigation. "The floods, if they come early in the season and are not of great height or long duration," are productive of as much good as of harm, "as the cultivators have time to transplant if the crops are destroyed, and the land is enriched by the silt they leave."[37]

The average family of farmers, who form over three-fifths of the population, is moderately comfortable and has to work hard only during the months of *áṣáḍha* and *agrahāyaṇa*.

Since 1793, the Permanent Settlement was introduced in Tirhut but it was alleged that "no less than three-fifths of the area of Tirhnt escaped assessment."[38] The zamindars have been patrons of learning and culture, but on the whole they have been allowed great scope for oppression. The Bihar Tenancy Act of 1939 has, however, bettered the condition of the peasants whose organization and general uplift is higher than in any other part of India.

A peculiarity of Maithila land-system is the large number of revenue-free grants of land. "The free grant of land to Brahmans for their maintenance, for the encouragement of learning, or for the worship of the gods has always been recognized by Hindus as a becoming act of piety. It is not surprising, therefore, that in Mithila, whose chief claim to a place in history rests on its former influence as a centre of Hindu religion and learning, rent-free grants to the learned priestly caste were exceptionally numerous...Again, it was customary in the Mughal era to remunerate civil and military

36. Ibid, p. 49.
37. Ibid, p. 50.
38. Ibid, pp. 51, 63, 67 ff.

subordinates by grants of land; and the remoteness of the (*country*) from the centre of the Mughal power rendered it easy for the subordinate officials of the Empire to carve out for themselves *jágirs* and *nánkars*."[39]

Mr. O'Malley has brought out the influence of geographical isolation on the character of the people of Mithila:

> "(Mithila) has been a tract too proud to admit other nationalities to intercourse on equal terms, and has passed through conquest after conquest, from the north, from the east and from the west, without changing its ancestral peculiarities..." (LSI V ii p. 4). (*This is due to its geographical isolation.*) "The river Gandak proved in the days of the Muhammadan invasion a curiously strong barrier; and while the countries to the west of the Gandak and south of the Ganges were constantly subjected to the turbulent influences that accompanied the rule of the Mughal dynasty, the country of Mithila .. remained more or less at peace under Hindu kings. The results of the seclusion may be seen even in the present day."[40]

The rural people are quiet and lead peaceful life. The soil is rich-yielding and there are a large number of groves and grasses growing on swamps and marshes which make housing cheap and easy. Besides, there are a number of village weavers still found carrying on their trade. Thus, they do not find much difficulty in meeting their needs. The result is that they tend to be easy going, unenterprising and less active in the ways of modern world which has brought an intensity and speed in man's life hitherto unknown.

Mithila the Home of Traditional Learning

It has been observed that:

> "The history of Mithila does not centre round valiant feats of arms, but round courts engrossed in the

39. Ibid, p. 117-118.
40. Ibid, p. 29. Also see f. n. 43 *infra*.

luxurious enjoyment of literature and learning. But while Mithila's bid for fame does not rest on heroic deeds, it must be duly honoured as the home where the enlightened and learned might find a generous patron, peace and safety. In this country with principalities apparently undisturbed by internal troubles and heedless of external convulsion; with courts devoted to learning and culture, where poets and philosophers lived in honour and affluence our first impulse is to look for some traces of superior mental development in the mind of the people at large, at least for some grains of enlightenment fallen from over-flowing store of their masters."[41]

Indeed, the fame of Mithila and her people has never been due to any other cause. That is why it was said: धर्मस्य तत्त्वं विज्ञेयं मिथिलाव्यवहारत.[42] (The path of Duty can be known from the usages Mithila). Kings and queens have been themselves scholars and have attracted the best that was in the land to their courts. The House of Khaṇḍavā (Khaṇḍavalākula) whose descendants constitute the present owners of the Darbhanga Raj owed its accession to power to scholarship only It may be difficult to find parallels to Maithila kings inasmuch as they have been literally "Philosopher-kings." Who does not know of the famous Vedic "Jīvana-mukta" Vaideha Janaka and in later times, of the Navya-Nyaya scholar Maharaja Maheśa Thakura? Well may the people of Mithila have boasted: अहो तीरभुक्तीयाः स्वभावाद् गुणगर्विणः भवन्ति[43] (Well! the people of Tīrabhukti are by nature proud of their merits).

The earliest available records reveal that Mithila was for long a centre of Vedic and Upaniṣadic lore. It was not only the court where the light of knowledge burnt, but among

41. *Darbhanga District Gazetteer*, p. 22.
42. Traditionally said to be Yājñavalkya's words.
43. 'Gītavidyakathā' in *Puruṣaparīkṣā* by Vidyāpati.

the lower classes of society also (such as the Dharma-Vyādha's story[44] reveals) there was considerable enlightenment.

The foundations of four of the six orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy were laid in Mithila from about 1,000 B. C. to 600 B. C. Gautama,[45] Kaṇāda,[46] Jaiminī[47] and Kapila[48] respectively expounded Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṁsā and Sāṅkhya for the first time. From the sixth to the third century B. C. the city of Vaiśālī, within her borders, rose as the seat of Buddhistic thought, but under the leadership of Kumārila[49] and Udayana[49] she succeeded in reestablishing the supremacy of Brahminical thought.

When, later on the Turks invaded the country, every scholar strained himself to prescribe rules of social and moral conduct.[50] This was the reason why Navya-nyāya, Pūrva-Mīmāṁsa and Smṛti-nibandhas found here such a great centre in the medieval ages.[51]

Knowing the importance of her tradition Mithila guarded with extreme jealousy her teachings. Hence there grew up rigorous insti-

44. Vanaparva, *Mahâbhârata*.

45. SINGH, p. 190-2 and JHA COM, p. 388.

46. Vindhyeshvari Prasad, Introduction to *Vaiśeṣika-Darśana* quoted by MODA 80, p. 4, f. n. 1.

47. JHA COM, p. 388 ff.

48. Ibid. It is not clear if both Kakarauṛa and Kapileśvara are equally relics of his Aśrama.

49. Vide—*Critical Bibliography of Pûrva-Mimâṁsâ*, by Dr. Umesha Mishra.

50. See Introduction to MMC I and Introduction to Caṇḍeśvara's *Râjanîtiratnâkara* by Dr. K. P. Jayaswal.

51. Dr. U. Mishra, "Bihāra Meṅ Nyāya Aura Mimāṁsā kī Unnati" in JAYANTI.

tutions like those of Sarayantra[52] or Salākā-parīkṣā,[53] and of Upādhyāyas-Mahopādhyāyas-and-Mahāmahopādhyāyas.[54]

The marks of this respect and devotion to traditional learning are writ large in the life of the people of Mithila. Their place-names[55] are reminiscent of their cultivation of Sanskritic studies and even their games and pastimes[56] reveal the Vedantic *Weltanschauung* in their life.

The cumulative effect of this extra-ordinary devotion to the traditional learning has been, on the whole, very fruitful. It has kept here the torch of scholarship and culture burning throughout the ages. Nevertheless, it must be said that it has also been responsible for the orthodoxy and conservatism that are found in Mithila. The Maithils are guided by the mint, anise and cumin of the Brahminic Law in their everyday life.[57] They view everything that runs counter to it with great suspicion. The result is that while a majority of Indian Provinces were giving new lease of life to their languages and literatures by imbibing new influences with the study of western languages and literatures, Mithila remained comparatively static for a long time. This explains the

52. See Ganganatha Jha, *Kavirahasya*, p. 74 ; Introduction to MMO II by Dr. K. P. Jayaswal ; and the "Declaration of a Sara-Yantri" by R. Jha OCP XII, ii, pp. 310-325.

53. Vide—Satishachandra Vidyabhushana's *History of Indian Logic*, p. 23 f. n. 1 and MM Gopinatha Kaviraja in *Saraswati Bhavana Studies IV*, p. 69.

54. Vide—Foreword by Dr Ganganatha Jha to Keshi Mishra's edition of MM Sachala Mishra's commentary on Govardhana's *Āryāsaptaśatī*, p. ii.

55. Vide—J. Mishra's "Some Aspects of Maithila Culture" in JBRS XXXIII Parts I and II, pp. 45-64.

56. Ibid.

57. LSI V. ii. p, 4.

delay in the introduction of Journalism and various other things in Maithili. This also explains the almost complete neglect of the language in Educational and Administrative spheres today.

The exclusive and excessive cultivation of Sanskritic studies is also responsible for the archaic, complex and synthetic character of the mother-tongue of the people of Mithila. The verb-system of Maithili is extremely complicated, its nouns continue to take inflexions, and its pronouns and certain other features preserve many obsolete links in the study of Modern Indo-Aryan Philology.

So far as its literature is concerned, it can be said without fear of contradiction that no other Modern Indian literature has writers who follow the lines of Sanskrit literature so closely. Not only the plots and themes have been borrowed from Sanskrit, and the imagery, the prosody and the thought have been basically associated with Sanskrit and Prakrit till recently, and the treatment of subjects has been on the lines of Sanskrit Aesthetics and Rhetoric; but the types of literature in Sanskrit have also been perpetuated in several ways. Thus, the greatest Maithili Grammatical Treatise by Mahāvaiyākaraṇa Dinabandhu Jha is written in Sūtra-form and has a long Dhātupāṭha attached to it in the Pāṇinian manner; the "Regular" Maithili drama has three languages in it—Sanskrit, Prakrit and Maithili after the Sanskrit dramatists; and lastly, such types as the Mahākāvya, the Khaṇḍa-Kāvya, and the Campu are still the common forms in which Maithili authors take pride. Even the Folk Tales (especially the Vratakathās) are inspired by the Purāṇas and Epics.

In one way the literature of Maithili has suffered very much by the high esteem in which

Sanskrit has been held in Mithila. The Sanskrit scholars have always considered Maithili as the 'Apabhraṁśa' (*lit.* fallen, degraded) language and therefore, only fit to embody light literature. This is why we did not have any serious or scholarly writing in Maithili in the past; the fit vehicle for it was considered to be Sanskrit alone. It is only in the XX century that people are prepared to contribute serious works also in the vernacular. Of course, this meant also that the less scholarly of the Brāhmaṇas, the Kāyasthas, and others took the greatest share in producing Maithili literature in the past and thus balanced the otherwise over-burdening of the language with models and ideas of Sanskrit literature, and were instrumental in eventually bringing it nearer to the masses than could otherwise be possible with its courtly and aristocratic patronage.

Religious Life of Mithila

There has never been any sectarianism in Mithila. There has neither been ever any new religious order preached in Mithila. Hindu Maithils are generally believers in the Varṇāśrama Dharma and in simple devotion to Hindu gods and deities.

The three main figures (the Triad) who have inspired and animated their souls throughout the ages are Śiva, Śakti and Viṣṇu. They have equally valued them as capable of giving rewards. The simultaneous three-fold marks on the forehead of the Brāhmaṇas represent this characteristic of the Maithils: the three horizontal lines of the sacred ashes represent their devotion to Śiva, the vertical white sandal paste represents their faith in Viṣṇu and the dot of red sandal paste or of vermillion represents their veneration for Śakti.

The worship of Śiva is, however, the most widespread among the people of Mithila. The

greater popularity of full fasting on the Kṛṣṇa-pakṣa caturdaśī than on an ekādaśī; the worship of thousands and lakhs of clay-made Śiva-liṅgas on special occasions; the faith that Śiva alone can ultimately award Mukti; and several other things, point out the great place that Śiva occupies in their hearts. It is because of this that the songs of Śiva are a speciality of Mithila. They are of two kinds: Nacārīs and Maheśavānīs. The former is a class of pure devotional hymns, and the second deals with the married life of Hara and Gaurī in general. From the days of Vidyāpati to those of Candā Jha, poets have produced excellent Nacārīs and Maheśavānīs. This is why the *Āin-i-Akbarī* (1598) notices the 'Lacharīs' of Tirhut as one of its specialities,[58] and this is also why hundreds and thousands of Maithila pilgrims visit Kapileśvara, Paśupatinātha or carry heavy Kāmaru on foot to the Temple of Vaidyanātha Dhāma singing "Kakhan haraba mora dukh he Bholānātha" and shed innumerable tears of devotion. Almost every village in Mithila has a Mahādeva-Maṭha and organises occasionally public worship of Mahādeva.

Equally widespread is the worship of Śakti. There is, however, one great difference between the two. There is a marked paucity of stories recording any attainment of 'siddhis' by the worship of Lord Śiva, whereas those regarding Śakti devotees are replete with their attainment of miraculous powers. This is probably because Śakti is supposed to give these 'siddhis' but the God who can award 'mukti' or salvation, which is a higher thing, is Lord Śiva alone. Yet, some of Mithila's great saints and Upāsakas have been associated with Śakti, such as, Devāditya, Vardhamāna, Madana Upādhyāya,

58. Bloehman's Translation, Vol. III p. 252. Cf. the Bengali Metre লাচাড়ী.

Dhirendra Upādhyāya, Gokulanātha Upādhyāya and Rājarṣi Mithileśa Rameshvara Singh; every house-hold has a 'gosāuni', and there are famous holy sites like Uccaitha, Janakapur, Cāmuṇḍāsthāna, Ugratārāsthana, and other important Siddha Pīṭhas; the first verse taught to a child is in praise of Śakti[59]; the Aipana (or painted yantras on the ground)[60]; the names of Maithils, like, Tantradhārī, Tantranātha, Śaktinātha, Khaḍgadhāri, Tārācaraṇa, Ādyācaraṇa etc.[61]; the Śaba a rites of Maithila women; the sensuous character of the people[62]; the vogue of fish eating; the Tāntric headdress (the पाग); the offering of sweet-rice cooked in milk and the feeding of 'Kumārīs' (called "Pātaḍi ceremony") on all auspicious occasions; the widespread public worship of earthen images of Durgā in Dasehra[63]; the Mātṛkā-Pūjā and the prevalence of Śakti Dīkṣā (-iṣṭa) mantra—All these point to the great importance of Śakti in Maithila religious beliefs.[64] Of course, in these as in many other important matters, there is a great deal of agreement with Bengal and Assam.

59. *Kavirahasya* by Dr. Ganganatha Jha, p. 10. The verse is—

सा ते भवतु सुप्रीता देवी शिखरवासिनी ।
उग्रेण तपसा लब्धो यया पशुपतिः पतिः ॥

60. Cf. "Aripanaprakāśa" by Jīvananda Thakur.

61. See Gangapati Singh's article in VIBHUTI ANKA.

62. Shashinatha Chaudhari, *Mithilādarśana*, p. 125.

63. This should be noted as a feature distinct from the prevalence of Rāmalilā in Dasehra in Madhyadeśa.

64. Cf. गौडैरुत्पादिता विद्या मैथिलैः प्रकटीकृता ।
क्वचित् क्वचिन्महाराष्ट्रे गुर्ज्जरे प्रलयं गता ॥

which purports to describe the history of Śāktism and Mithila's place in it. See R. C. Chanda, *Indo-Aryan Races* p.153 f. n., and Chintaharan Chakravarti's article in *Cultural Heritage of India*, II p. 291 (Published by Ramakrishna Matha).

The reverence for Śakti has influenced her script and literature. Not only we have a large number of Tāntric works in Sanskrit, but almost all writers praise Śakti as the Primal (Ādya) Energy, and the script of Maithili called Maithilākṣara or Tirhutā has developed in accordance with Tantric Yantras. This has been given in detail in the *Kámadhenu-tantra* and the *Varnoddhára-tantra.*[65] It may be shown how the letter *ra* is formed The three straight lines form the '*trikona*' (triangle) and the line inside is a modern development of a 'Bindu' which is found in Medieval inscriptions.[66] Similarly, the Áñjī the auspicious sign with which the Maithila alphabet begins, is a Tāntric representation of the Kuṇḍalinī.[67]

As regards Maithili literature, the most important result is 'Gosāuni-ka Gita' without which no auspicious religious ceremony will ever begin in Mithila. There are also a large number of songs, such as 'Joga', which are based on pseudo-Tāntric beliefs and superstitions. Besides these, a number of Tāntric documents, (esp. Maithili mantras) are available in the nature of incantations and charms which are not fully understood even by the experts of Mantra-Śāstra, but nonetheless they are said to do their work very efficaciously.

As contrasted with these two deities, the worship of Viṣṇu has exercised no great influence on the vernacular literature of the country. The proximity of Śālagrāmī river from whose

65. Quoted in the *Śabdakalpadruma* (a Sanskrit Dictionary in Bengali characters in four Volumes).

66. *E.g.*, Vide—Kandahā Inscription of 1435, edited by K. P. Jayaswal JBORS, March 1934, and the rejoinder to it by Dr. Umesha Mishra in *Allahabad University Studies*, 1934, pp. 63-65.

67. See JKAMARUPA I, and Chapter II *infra*.

source we get the Śālagrāma idol of Viṣṇu, the observance of all principal Vaiṣṇava fasts and festivals, the immense popularity of *Bhágavata*, *Harivamsa* and *Brahmavaivarta* Purāṇas—are some of the signs which show that there is some popularity of Vaiṣṇava worship as well. But whatever might be the opinion of scholars with regard to the long and rich traditions of Maithili Love Poetry connected with Kṛṣṇa, it must be understood that it was in lands other than Mithila where Maithili was able to produce great Vaiṣṇava religious literature. It is remarkable that Vaiṣṇava hymns called 'Bhajans' are practically non-existant in pure Maithili and whenever people need them they have recourse to 'Bhajans' in other languages.

The reason for this is the common belief in Mithila that a Vaiṣṇava is generally a 'Virakta' (retired), one who has no more connection with ordinary life. Indeed, to be a Vaiṣṇava means, in Maithili idiom, to be one who though a Śakta, yet has given up the eating of fish and the 'Prasada' of the goddess (such a person may also put on a necklace of 'Tulasī'). A typical Maithila, who is more of an epicurean than of a stoic, usually avoids being a Vaiṣṇava in the above sense. A Maithila Vaiṣṇava generally regards himself to have transcended the bounds of all kinds, and, therefore, perhaps seeks a medium of expression for his 'Bhajans', which is not local. He is tempted to use the vernaculars of the birthplace of two of the greatest Vaiṣṇava *avatáras*—Rama of Avadha and Kṛṣṇa of Mathura.

It is, therefore, proper to conclude that the devotional mainsprings of Maithila mind have been Śiva and Śakti, and the paramount religious character of the people is Smarta Brahmanical Hinduism.

Hindus and Muslims of Mithila

It is remarkable that in so predominantly Brahmanical a country, there are several features which show a complete fusion of Hindus and Muslims. This is found not only in the large number of Persian and Arabic words which are used by Hindus in the most intimate and sacred places: such as, Kabulā, Rikabī, Jājirū, Tāja, Fāraka, Dalāna, Mahaphā, Habelī etc., (in the sense of "vowing an offering or sacrifice to a deity", "a dish", "lavatory", "princely or Babuāni cap", "money or cash paid in settling marriages between two parties of different status", "guest room or sitting place for gents, outside the court-yard", "pallanquin", "courtyard or household of respectable persons" etc.)—(leaving aside, of course, hundreds of words in administrative and official contexts, in spite of the fact that Mithila is one of the few provinces in India where legal judgments were delivered strictly according to traditional Hindu manner till as late as the Eighteenth Century,—vide K P. Jayasawal in *JBORS* 1920, on the "Judgment of Sachala Mishra"),—but also in the surnames of Brāhmaṇas such as Khan, Bakhśī and Chaudharī. The most important fact to be noticed in this connection is, however, that the Taziā (or *dáhá* as it is called by Maithils), is respected, participated, welcomed and even worshipped by every one, whether he is a Hindu or a Muslim. I have myself witnessed the *dáhá* coming to our houses and people of the locality joining and singing songs in the processions of Taziā as Hindus do in the Rāmalīlā processions in the U. P.[68]

68. So also says Babu Nagendranatha Gupta in his *Reflections and Reminiscenes* (Published by Hind Kitab Limited, Bombay) as quoted in the *Indian PEN* XIII. 10. p. 149, October 1947.

Besides this, Muslims are found devoutly singing Hindu songs in praise of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa as commonly as Hindus worship Muslim saints (such as, the *Panca-piriyā* i.e. a Hindu who worships Ghazi Mian and other four Pīrs; *Bihar Peasant Life*, p. 407).[69] There is one deity, called Bālāpīra, worshipped by Hindus, who will not be pleased unless a cock is sacrificed for him.

The National Maithila Era is the Fasali Era. Like the rest of India, in music the union of Hindus and Muslims is most patently observed here; the Maithila musician Locana is the first prominent Hindu writer on music who incorporates Iman and Firdausī Rāgas invented by the famous Muslim singer Amir Khusro.[70]

These are, I am sure, telling instances of how much mutual tolerance and respect are found amongst the Hindus and the Muslims of Mithila. In economic, agricultural and various other common matters, of course, there is no end to this spirit, though in recent months there has been some deterioration in their harmonious relations.

Maithili has to its credit a number of Marsiyas and other songs composed by Muslim folk poets. The following specimens illustrate their good and bad qualities:

(*a*) *A Marsiya*:

एहि दसो दिन सैअद बंसवा कटोलकैं रे हाए हाय ० ॥
सेहो बंसवा मेलै बिसरनमा रे हाए हाय ० ॥ १ ॥
एहि दसो दिन सैअद लकड़ी चिरोलकै रे हाए हाय ० ॥
सेहो लकड़ी मेलै बिसरनमा रे हाए हाय ० ॥ २ ॥

69. Cf. The Muslim Kunjara who worships a deity called Rāma Thākura (Grierson, *Bihar Peasant Life*, p. 404)

70. Cf. Acharya Kshitimohan Sen's article in *Vishva-bharati Quarterly*, 1944, Pt. III and RT pp. 126, 127, 128, 129.

एहि दसो दिन सैअद लकड़ी कन्धोलकै रे हाए हाय ० ॥
सेहो लकड़ी मेलै बिसरनमा रे हाए हाय ० ॥ ३ ॥
एहि दसो दिन सैयद कगता सटोलकै रे हाए हाय ० ॥
सेहो कगता मेलैं बिसरनमा रे हाए हाय ० ॥ ४ ॥
एहि दसो दिन सैअद सेहला बेसाहलकै रे हाए हाय ० ॥
सेहो सेहला मेलै बिसरनमा रे हाए हाय ० ॥ ५ ॥
एहि दसो दिन सैअद पगड़ी बन्होलकै रे हाए हाय ० ॥
सेहो पगड़ी मेलै बिसरनमा रे हाए हाय ० ॥ ६ ॥[71]

(*b*) The following poem depicts the life of a daughter-in-law from the point of view of the mother-in-law:

सखी देखु मने मन,
बेटी जकाँ पुतहु यजैय टना टन ॥ १ ॥
नन्दी के बात सुनी करैय हन हन,
स्वामीजी के बचन सुनी गजइय मने मन ॥ २ ॥
नहिरा मे अन्न बिना फिरे बने बन,
सासुर मे आबि खाइये छन छन ॥ ३ ॥
ससूर जो किछो बाजे करै भन भन,
छोटका देवर के देखि बाजे चना चन ॥ ४ ॥
नहिरा मे फड़ा पैहड़ी करै खन खन,
सासूर मे छुरा पेन्ह के चलै झना झन ॥ ५ ॥
गोतनी से लरे ले करे सना सन,
काम काज कीछु नई करे हना हन ॥ ६ ॥
सासु के बचन सुनि करै रन रन,
लोक के न लाज राखे बाजे टना टन ॥ ७ ॥
'रहमान' कहत सखी सोचु मने मन,
काजक समय मे पुतहु करइय कन कन ॥ ८ ॥[72]

Panji and Kulinism of Mithila

In their social structure, the Maithils have given birth to an elaborate system of keeping

71. From Grierson's *Maithili Chrestomathy*, p. 20.

72. *Bedhabajamânâ* (published by M. Abdul Rahman Bookseller, Village Sarauti, P. O. Ghongharadia, District Darbhanga), p. 7.

genealogies (*Panjis*). Though to-day they are prepared for Brāhmaṇas and Kāyasthas alone, it seems that formerly they were current among other Hindu classes also.[73] This custom of keeping genealogies goes back to about 1100; but it was Mahārāja Harisimhadeva who ordered detailed genealogies to be scientifically recorded for the first time on Pañjīs (*lit.* registers) in c. 1310 ?,[74] so that marriages within forbidden degrees of relationship may not take place. He made it obligatory for every person to get a certificate of non-relationship (*A-sva-jana-patra*) between the two contracting parties from the genealogists (*Panjikārs*).[75]

In course of time, these genealogical records assumed gigantic proportions and it was felt necessary that the official Pañjīkārs should be available to people at certain appointed places throughout Mithila. This is why one of the persistent references in Maithila fiction is to the Pañjīkārs whenever a marriage is to be settled. The institution of the Ghaṭaka (the person who knows most of the genealogies and

73. *Ghaṭakarāja* by Ghanananda Jha p. 13. Published by Dr Janardana Jha, P. O. Ranitol, District, Darbhanga. Also see, *infra*, p. 30 f. n.

74. Two different verses are quoted for the date :

(i) शाके श्रीहरिसिंहदेवनृपतेभूंपा(या?)र्के तुल्येऽजनिः ॥

तस्माद्दन्तमितेऽब्दके द्विजगणैः पञ्जीप्रबन्धः कृतः ॥

(*i.e.* 1232 Śāke=1310 A. D.) Sometimes interpreted as 1248 Śāke=1326 A. D. Vide *Ghaṭakarāja*, p. 14. MITHILANKA, p. 69, 151. See also BAKHSI, p. 38 f. n., p. 459 and MODA 2, p. 23.

(ii) तस्माद्ब्रमितेऽब्दके वंशकलितं यद्विश्वचक्रे पुरा,

तद्विप्राय समर्पितं सुकृतिने शान्ताय सर्वाधिने ।

ब्राह्मणानां समुत्पत्तिस्तद्बीजिकथनं तथा,

करोति रघुदेवाख्यः पाण्डुः प्रजीविनि स्वयम् ॥

See SINGH, p. 159 (which gives 1216 Śāke; 1616 in f, n. is obviously a misprint); BAKHŚI, p. 494 f. n.

75. JBORS III p. 515.

unofficially and informally helps people in contracting truly admissible marriages to a certain extent) grew out of this very feature in Maithila society.[76] The typical Ghaṭaka in literature is 'Narada' but we have lately had very funny pictures of the Ghaṭaka.[77]

Another corollery of the Pañjis was the evil custom of Bikauā (or Kulinism).[78] It appears that after some time when these Pañjis came into being, the good or bad qualities

76. The 'Varṇaratnākara' of Jyotirīśvara is the earliest known work which refers to the Ghaṭaka (c. 1324).

77. *E.g.* in 'Narmadāsāgarasaṭṭaka' by Jivana Jha and in *Būḍhavara* by Vaidyanatha Mishra 'Yātrī'.

78. Later on borrowed by Bengal and Assam. Cf. 'The system of Kulinism was borrowed some centuries ago by the Brahmanas of Bengal'—Risley in his famous work "The People of India" (p. 215), from Girindra Natha Dutta's "The Kayasthas and Brahmanas of Bengal" (1906). The following points also support this—(*a*) The Bengali Kulapañjikā texts are known after some avowedly Maithila Smṛti Nibandha authorities on marriage, such as, Hari Mishra and Vachaspati Mishra. (*b*) The earliest Kulaji texts do not date before the latter half of the 15th Century; indeed, even the genuineness of some early texts is doubtful—(See Dr. R. C. Majumdar, 'History of Bengal' Vol. I pp. 624-25)—whereas Maithila texts of Pañji are expressly dated in the early 14th Century. (*c*) The system of keeping genealogical records among Kayasthas in Assam was borrowed from Mithila: Says N. N. Vasu in his "Social History of Kamarupa" (Vol. II. p. 168)—'Kavindra patra (like his fore-father who by introducing the custom of keeping genealogical registers had kept an authorised record of the status of the Kayasthas of Mithila) reconstructed on lines similar to those of his ancestor, the Kayastha community of Kamarupa. As in Mithila so in Kamarupa the Dasa are regarded as Kulins, then come the Devas and Dattas in point of honour in a social hierarchy. This order even now obtains among the Kayasthas of Kamarupa'. All this makes it likely that Mithila was the original home of Kulinism. Lastly, (*d*) according to certain scholars, though Harisimhadeva re-organised society, the Pañjis were known at the time of Nānyadeva (c. 1097). Now this date is very much earlier than the 'legendary' ascription of Bengal Kulajis

attached to the families or the villages of particular families came to be gradually indicated by the last important name of the Head of the Family or by that of its village, both being known as *Pánji* or *Laukita* of the Family. Now, it is not clear as to when, among Brāhmaṇas, a further grouping came into existence by which they were broadly divided into Śrotriyas (Soti), Yogyas (Joga), Pañjibaddhas and Jayabārs. It appears that the best Brahmaṇas were known as Śrotriyas; the

to the reign of Vallala Sen (c. 1158-1180). It may be pointed out that the text on which Bengali tradition makes Vallala Sen distinguish persons as Kulins is that of Vachaspati Mishra who flourished in about 15th Century, and thus further confuses the early origin of Bengal Kulinism. It is not known when exactly Kulinism went to Bengal, but from what we know of the relations of Bengal and Mithila during 14th—16th centuries it seems possible that it went there when Bengali scholars used to haunt Maithila Catuṣpāṭhis as students of Nyāya, Mimāṁsā and Smṛti-Nibandha-dharmaśastras. Risley calls Maithila kulins as bikauās (or vendors) who married sometimes as many as forty or fifty wives. They are, however, more properly known as "Bhalamānusas".

Pandit Ramanatha Jha thus describes the Brāhmaṇa Pañji texts: "These Panjis are the most exhaustive and at the same time most authoritative genealogies of all the important families of the Maithil Brahmins, kept by professional Panjikars, generation after generation, since the days of Maharaja Harisimhadeva, the last of the Karnata kings of Mithila, who in the Saka year 1248(?) (equivalent to 1326 A. D.) brought them into being, which in the cases of more important families go back almost to a couple of centuries earlier and which in all cases continue since that time up to the present day without a break. Of these Panjis there are two broad classes. The more ancient of them, called the Mūla Panji, confines itself to a single family or stock and records the names of sons as well as daughters with their marriages and children. The other which is more common these days is called the Śākhā Panji. It starts with one family, the family of the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga, and branches off into another family as soon as a marriage occurs in it. It contains, therefore, the genealogies of all the

next best of them came to be called Yogyas (the qualified) and all the rest whose names were considered fit to bear a pānji-name were Pañjibaddhas. The Jayabārs were obviously those who were considered not fit to be included in any of the above classes. The first three groups were generally distinguished as Bhalamānusas (=Kulīns). The Bhalamānusa ranks were, however, at one time, open to any Maithila Brāhmaṇa who really deserved them.[79] Later on, this flexibility disappeared and the two groups (Bhalamānusas and the Non-Bhalamānusas) developed hypergamous tendencies. From an exaggerated importance placed on the value of having been born in a family of high *Pánji*, the much-condemned evils of Bikauā (Kulinism) were born. The Bhalamānusas were allured to marry more than one wife of lower families on monetary terms. This degenerated

important families, because all important families are inter-connected by marriages. In this, however, the names of women do not occur and daughters are recorded not in the families of their birth but in those of their marriages. These Panjis are growing day by day and are kept by professional Panjikars who guard them as their valuable treasures. They do not allow a layman to have an access to them and, written as they are in a technical style of their own, they are not quite intelligible at the first glance, though a little practice can give one an insight into their method and intricacies." *Patna University Journal*, Vol I, No. 2, January 1945, p. 11.

It may be repeated that such geneological records were not limited to Brāhmaṇas only ; those of Kṣatriyas, Vaiśyas and Kāyasthas are known to have existed. Vide—Ghanananda Jha, *Ghaṭakarāja* (pp. 39 and 45) and Rasabiharilaladasa, *Mithilādarpaṇa* (Vol. II, p. 16).

79. Thus even today any Maithila Brāhmaṇa can be made a Śrotriya (the highest class of Maithila Brāhmaṇas) by the Maharajadhiraja of Darbhanga, and in the past, we are told, Kukaḍī, Dhare Jha, Piṇḍārucha, Kachuā, Dhakajarī, Kamalanārāyanā Pāthaka etc. were raised from lower ranks to higher ranks—vide, IMODA, New Series 38, p. 12 ; New Series 4, p. 24 ; Old Series 161 etc.

feature of Maithila life was found to reach its worst levels when it was imported to Bengal. To-day however, all this is as much out of date in Mithila as in Bengal, but the rivalry between Sotis and Brāhmaṇas or between the Bhalamānusas and the Non-Bhalamānusas continues in some form or other.

The Pañji-Prabandha is one of the most important forces in Maithila life. It has encouraged religious and scholarly life, preserved purity of blood, and, at the same time, embodied in the most authoritative and exhaustive manner the origin and history of Maithila families. Maithili fiction is replete with references to its various good and evil facets. A sympathetic appreciation of this old custom, which has in the past played an important part in preserving social order and encouraged a healthy rivalry for virtuous and noble life, should, however, prevent us from merely condemning it blindly.

Love of Music and the Drama

Another important feature of Maithila life has been its great devotion to the arts of music and dancing. Unfortunately, no full history of Mithila School of Music has been attempted as yet,[80] though the importance of its knowledge is indispensable for a complete understanding of the origin and growth of vernacular literature throughout Eastern India.

Music appears to have been greatly valued in Mithila from very early times,[81] but there

80. The only attempts so far made have been by Chetantha Jha (Introduction to Umāpati's "Pārijātaharaṇa"), by Murari Prasad, Advocate (Bihāra Aura Sangitakalā, in JAYANTI, p. 281 and p. 297) and by Ishanatha Jha (Vidyāpati O Hunaka Sangitakalā in "Mihira", 1944).

81. See B. Majumdar, *Indian Nation*, Puja No., October 19, 1947, p. xix.

is no account available of its individual achievements till quite late.

The earliest reference to local (called "Popular" as distinguished from Classical) Rāgas and Rāginis is found in the Caryā-padas. Mahārāja Nānyadeva (1097-1133), however, seems to have first patronised and developed the "Popular" Rāgas on regular lines. His work *Sarasvatīhṛdayālankārahāra*[82] was written after he had established himself as the ruler of Mithila. After him, Jayadeva (c. 1120), the author of the *Gītagovinda*, exercised the greatest influence on the evolution of the Mithila School of Music. Whether Jayadeva's music was "bad" as Kumbha (14th Century) alleges it to be[83] or not, his melodious tunes inspired Maithils, among others, with a new kind of musical poetry. There were numerous commentators and imitators of his melodies—the earliest and the greatest of whom was Vidyāpati.

We learn of great musical activity in the reign of Mahārāja Harisimhadeva (1295-1323/4). He was himself a great expert in music and in the Nṛtyavidya-Kathā of *Puruṣaparīkṣā*, a Maithila musician says that 'Hara or Harasimhadeva alone could judge his worth'. His court had such expert musicians as Jyotirīśvara, who gives a very elaborate description of musical activities in 14th century Mithila. In the sixth Kallola of his work, *Varna-Ratnākara*, he gives

> "an elaborate description of a *Bhāṭa* or court bard, panegyrist and genealogist as well as emissary of kings. He was a high dignitary, and his costly

82. Ms in Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona ; a copy of it is in the Library of the Allahabad University. See on it, Ramakrishna Kavi's article in the "Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society" Vol. I.

83. See Krishnamachariar, *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 849.

dress was in keeping with his status. He was a scholar too, and a list is given of the works on Sanskrit and Prakrit grammar, rhetoric and prosody that he had to study together with the languages (Prakrita) that he must know. His mental qualities are stated; and the kingly state in which he travels is described...... The *Vidyâwanta*, a professional singer and music master, a person who is commonly known as a *kalâwanta* or *kalâwat* at the present day, is described and his state and his training are scarcely inferior to that of the more exalted Bhāṭa. In this connection the name of the *râgas*, of the *śrutis* as well as the 7 kinds of गायन-दोष (or defects of singers) and the 14 kinds of गीत दोष (or defects of singing), are mentioned."[84]

More interesting than these is the description of dancing, and "there are three sections describing or enumerating the various kinds of dancing :—नृत्य-वर्णना, पात्रनृत्य-वर्णना and प्रेरणनृत्य-वर्णना. The 10 qualifications of the drumplayer (मुरजि) are mentioned, also the 12 kinds of drum-music (मुरज वाद्य), the time-beats (ताल), the 10 *rasas*, the 30 *vyabhicáríbhávas*" and so forth. The Pātra was a dancing girl who was well practised in the 32 kinds of movements and in the 32 kinds of graces. The Preraṇa was a male dancer. The various kinds of dances they executed are described. Finally, there is a list of 27 kinds of vīṇās (or lutes).

After the flight of Harisimhadeva to Nepal in c. 1325, the centre of musical activity also shifted. The next centuries saw great development of music by Maithils in Nepal. The first writer whose mention we have there is Singha-Bhupāla.[85] He may be identified with

84. S. K. Chatterji, Introduction to Jyotirīśvara's *Varṇaratnâkara*, p. xxix-xxx.

85. SINGH, p. 167; Aufrecht *Catalogus Catalogorum* I, p. 415 and p. 686. Part of this work has been translated into English and published from the Adyar Library, as *Sangītaratnâkaravyâkhyâ*.

Bhupālasimha who is mentioned in an inscription of Nepal as a Maithila ruler after Śakti (-Śakra-)singha and Hari-singha.[86]

The next reference we have is of Jagaddhara,[87] son of Ratnadhara and Damayantī. He is the famous Maithila commentator of *Málati-Mádhava* and flourished in about 1474-5. He wrote *Sangítasarvasva* which is quoted profusely by himself in his commentary on the *Venísamhára* and by Rucipati Upādhyāya and Rāghavabhaṭṭa, and is preserved in the Library of Rājaguru Hemarāja Sharma of Nepal.

The rulers of Nepal, however, continued their patronage. They were great scholars of music themselves. Some of them described themselves in their coins as संगीतार्णवपारंगत etc. Jagajjyotirmalla (1617-1633) was the author of *Sangítasárasangraha*,[88] an abstract of all works on music, dancing and acting known at his time, and of a commentary[89] on Abhilāṣā's work *Sangítacandra*,[90] written along with Vaṁśamaṇi Jha. Other works written during his reign were *Svarodayadípiká*, *Gítapancásiká*, etc. At the instance of his daughter's son Ananta, one Ghanaśyāma wrote a commentary on *Sríhastamuktávalí* which is one of the most important works of the Mithila school of music. The author of *Sríhastamuktávalí*,[91] was probably

86. See Introduction to *Rájanítiratnákara* of Caṇḍeśvara by K. P. Jayaswal, p. 24 f. n. Maithila tradition ignores him except for what we may infer from the Pañjī verse quoted in the above Introduction.

87. JBORS XIV, 2 and *Nepal Cat.*, p. 15 No. 447.

88. *Nepal Cat.*, p. 263 No. 1478.

89. Krishnamachariar, *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 869 and *Nepal Cat.*, p. 272.

90. *Nepal Cat.*, p. 262 No. (2) 222.

91. *Nepal Cat.*, p. 270 and MMO II, p. 170; printed with English translation in the JKAMARUPA VIII (New Series) 1941, No. 2, p. 62 ff.

the famous son of Mahārāja Maheśa Thākura, Śubhaṅkara Thākura. He has been wrongly identified with some Assamese author.[92] Śubhaṅkara is an important writer also because he wrote a work on Nṛtya preserved in the library of Rājaguru Hemrāja Sharma of Nepal, and, probably, of *Sangītadāmodara.*[93] He is praised by Rāmadāsa Upādhyāya[94] and Locana Śarma[95] as an expert in music. The time and identity of Ghanśyāma is, however, easy to determine. The name of a famous singer Ghanaśyāma is given by Locana[96] (c. 1681) and the Ms of Ghanaśyāma is dated as 1675. Thus the likelihood of the two being identical is great.

This was the golden age of Maithila music. In Nepal and in Mithila, Maithila musicians were very popular, and also enjoyed wide popularity abroad. They were invited to the court of Tripurā Rājās[97] and, like the Maithila musician who is described by Vidyāpati to have visited Gorakṣapura, one Budhana Miśra[98] went to Bengal as an expert in music.

92. JKAMARUPA VIII (New Series) No 2, p. 62 ff. Also see D. C. Bhattacharya's article in *Prabāsī* 1354 Sal.

93. Rajendralal Mitra "Notices of Sanskrit Mss," I, 389.

94. तदीय पुत्र कवित्वकर्मसुधासमुद्रः शुभङ्करः । (छाया)

—आनन्दविजयनाटिका (Raj Press Ed. p. 7).

95. सूनुस्तस्य सुधासमुद्रलहरीसूक्तिः कलानायको,
विख्यातः कवितालता हृदिगतो हारो नरोत्तंसकः ।
आसीच्छासितदुर्जनः प्रमुदितो नित्यम्प्रसन्नेश्वर-
स्सत्यार्थेन शुभङ्करः कृतिमतां नाम्ना धराधीश्वरः ॥ ४ ॥

—RT, p. 1.

96. RT. p. 38.

97. See N. N. Vasu, हिन्दीविश्वकोश Vol. X p. 40 ff. E.g. see राजमाला (1928 Ed.) Vol. II, p. 29, etc.

98. Halayudha, सेकशुभोदय (Chapter XIII), edited by Dr Sukumar Sen ; see also OCP IV ii p. 517.

A very authentic account is henceforth given in the *Rágatarangini* of Locana Śarma (c. 1681). He mentions a number of Rāgas and Rāgiṇīs which were peculiarly associated with Mithila School of Music in his time. He is very conscious of the perfection that it attained at the time of Mahārāja Mahinātha Thākura (1670/1-92/3) and Mahārājakumāra Narapati Thākura whom he calls Dhunigaṇasindhu (the ocean of Dhuni(?) music). In his work he gives a legendary origin of the art in Mithila; apparently he does not know the part which Karṇāṭs played in developing Maithila Music. He says that there was one Bhavabhuti(?) born in the family of Brāhmaṇas, who first pleased the deity and was successful in creating Kāvya. Having studied his fame at the assemblies of courtiers, Sumati the son of a Kāyastha, skilled in Arts, became, a professional Kathaka (lit. a narrator, a singer or a minstrel). His grandson, we are further told, Jayata was appointed by Mahārāja Śivasimha (c. 1412-16) for the poet-laureate Vidyāpati. These experts of music were able to develop numerous new lines of development in traditional Rāgas and Rāgiṇīs. Locana gives a detailed analysis of the new Maithila Rāgas as follows:

श्री-मद्विद्यापतिकवयितुः काव्यवर्णानुबद्धाँ
स्तत्तत्प्रायानथतःनुगख्यातगीतैर्निबद्धान् ।
रागानेभ्यः कथमपि तथा बद्धलीकृत्य धीमान्
प्रेम्णा श्रीमन्नरप रतो लोचनस्तॉल्लिलेख।

तेच ....

तीरभुक्तयन्यदेशेभ्यस्तीरभुक्तौ विलक्षणाः
स्वरभेदात्परं नाम्ना तेनतेनैव विश्रुताः ॥ (RT, p. 38).

॥ अथ संकीर्णासंकीर्णं मैथिलरागाणामेकीकृत्य गणना—

ललिता विभासी तदनु भैरव्यहिरानि वराडी च, ।
गोपीवल्लभगुजरी रामकली कापि शारङ्गी ॥

कौशिक कोडाराख्यौ वसन्तो धनश्री तथा ।
असावरी च श्रीरागो गौड़ामालवमालवौ ॥
भूपालीराजविजयनाटाः कामोदद्देशाख्यौ ।
केदारोऽथ मलारी इत्येते मैथिलाः कथिताः ॥

तदेतानेतावदवान्तरभेदाँश्चादाय रितुराजमन्तरा तीरभुक्तिदेशीयाः षत्नवतिसं-ख्यकारागा वेदितव्याः ॥ (RT, p. 119).

Locana seems to have been the greatest musician known to us merely because he was at last able to give a form and a definition to the Maithila rāgas and rāgiṇıs and their many subdivisions.

After Locana, we do not get any Maithila treatise on music, but henceforth the lyrical literature of Mithila illustrates the subsequent history. Umāpati and Govindadāsa were, for example, the great musicians of the 18th Century. In the 19th Century Harṣanātha Jha, Bhānā Jha, and Candā Jha revived some of the traditional Maithila melodies. The courts of Maithila kings and Babuāns have continued to patronise music. Mahārāja Chatrasingha (1808-1839), Mahārājakumāra Kırttisingha (died 1880), Gopıśvarasingha (died 1886), Mahārājakumāra Tantradhārīsingha (died 1915), Laliteśvarasingha of Ānandapura (died 1922), and Rājā Kālikānandasingha of Banailı were especially devoted to it.

Among individuals of the present day who have contributed to this Muse, mention may be made of Rājā Bahadur Śrımān Viśveśvarasingha, Śrīman Candradhārısingha of Rānti, Nacārī Jha, Ramcandra Jha, Sṛṣṭı Jha of Maṅgarapaṭṭī, Rāmānugraha Jha of Viṣnupura, Muni Mahārāja of Naḍuāra and Babu Raghunandana Jha. Certain places are specially known as centres of music in Modern Mithila, such as, Pañcagachiā, Panicobha, Tabhakā, Khaḍagā, Yogiāra, Viṣṇupura, Naḍuāra etc.

Maithila women have been very fond of music. We have the accounts of Mahādevī Lakhimā and of Candrakalā (the daughter-in-law of Vidyāpati) in medieval times. Of course, owing to several well-known causes the tradition of these women has not come down untarnished. Yet, the singing of Maithila women at such places as Khaḍakābasanta, Śaśipura, Pilakhabāḍa, Tārauni, Pokharauni, Kakrauḍa, Saurāṭha, Sugaunā and Cakautī are even today the glories of Mithila.

Conclusion

It is clear from the above survey of some aspects of Maithila cultural life that in every way Maithila mind is fit to produce great literature and art; it has a sound tradition of scholarship; its religious faith is deep and sustained; its social and cultural life have great sources of creating poetry and the drama of the highest order; and its past (if not present) cultivation of music reached such high degree of excellence as is capable of producing the very best melodies and songs.

CHAPTER II

THE MAITHILI LANGUAGE AND ITS SCRIPT

I

THE MAITHILI LANGUAGE

The Names of Maithili

The earliest name by which the language of Mithila was known, appears to be "Avahaṭṭha"[1] or "Mithila-Apabhraṁśa".[2] The word 'Apabhraṁśa', we are told, signified in Mithila the 'Deśa-Bhāṣā' (the 'vernacular' or the *'desila baená'*) as distinguished from Classical Sanskrit and Prākṛts.[3] We find the name 'Tirahutiyā" (spelt 'Tourutiana')[4] given to it in *Alphabetum Brammhanicum* (1771). This was obviously a confusion between the appellations 'Tirahutiā' sometimes used for the people of Mithila, and 'Tirhutā' the script of Maithili. Colebrooke for the first time called the language Maithili

1. *Kīrtilatâ*, edited by Dr. B. R. Saksena, Indian Press Ed., p. 6.

2. RT p. 37.

3. MMC II, Introduction p. 2 and p. 9. Śrīpati's commentary on *Prâkṛta Piṅgala*—

प्राकृतादल्पभेदैव अपभ्रष्टा प्रकीर्तिता
देशभाषां तथा केचिदपभ्रंश विदुर्बुधीः ।
संस्कृते प्राकृते वापि रूपसूत्रानुपेक्षत :
अपभ्रंश स विज्ञेयो भाषा यत्रैव लौकिकी ॥

4. LSI Vol. V ii p. 18.

(spelt 'Mithelee' or 'Mythili'[5]) in 1801. Eventually Grierson popularised this name,

Some of the dialects of Maithili have independent names such as 'Chikā-chikī', 'Jolahī', 'Khoṭṭā' and 'Goālarī' in different parts of the Province.

Area Where Spoken

The present linguistic boundaries of Maithili are much wider than her ancient geographical boundaries. In the words of Grierson, the area where Maithili is spoken may be described thus:

> "Maithili is spoken in its greatest purity (*Standard Maithili*) by the Brāhmaṇs of the north of the Darbhanga and Bhagalpur Districts and by those of Western Purnea. These men have a literature and traditions which have retarded the corruption of the dialect. It is also spoken with some purity, but with more signs of the wearing away of inflexions in the south of the Darbhanga Distrtct, and in those portions of the Monghyr and Bhagalpur Districts which lie on the northern bank of the Ganges. This may be called *Southern Standard Maithili*. To the east, in Purnea, it becomes more and more infected with Bengali, till, in the east of that District it is superseded by the Siripuriā dialect of that language which is a border form of speech, Bengali in the main, but containing expressions borrowed from Maithili and written not in the Bengali character, but in the Kaithi of Bihar...... The Maithili spoken in Purnea may be called *Eastern Maithili*.
>
> "South of the Ganges, Maithili is influenced more or less by the Magahi spoken to its west and partly also by Bengali. The result is a well-marked dialect, locally known as *Chhikā-chhikī bolī*, from its frequent use of the syllable '*chhik*'' which is the base on which the conjugation of the Verb Substantive is conjugated.
>
> 'The Maithili spoken in Muzaffarpur District, and in a strip of country on the eastern side of Darbhanga is strongly infected by the neighbouring

5. *Asiatic Researches* VII, 1801, pp. 199 and ff. Reprinted in his Essays, Ed. 1873, p. 26.

Bhojpuri spoken in various forms in the adjacent district of Saran and in the greater part of Champaran. So much is this the case, that, as spoken by some people, it is difficult to say where the dialect is Maithili or Bhojpuri. It may be called *Western Maithili.*

"The Musalmāns of Mithila do not all speak Maithili. In Muzaffarpur and Champaran they speak an altogether different dialect, closely allied to the language of Oudh (*Avadhi*). It is locally known as Shekhai or as Musalmāni and is sometimes called Jolahā Bolī, after the caste which forms one of the most numerous Musalmān tribes, according to popular opinion, of the locality. The true Jolahā Bolī, however, is the language spoken by the Musalmāns of Darbhangā, which is a form of Maithili, though somewhat corrupted by the admission of Persian and Arabic words to its vocabulary".[6]

It may, however, be noted that almost the whole of Champaran, which was for a pretty long time the centre of Mithila, has now given way to Madhesī (= speech of the Madhyadeśa) or Bhojpuri as it is called there, and that in addition to this, Magahi also may be regarded as a dialect of Maithili, *i.e*, the tract of Ancient Magadha or Modern South Bihar—the districts of Gayā, Hazaribagh, Palāmu, Monghyr and Bhagalpur—may be considered to be linguistically a part of Greater Mithila.

The linguistic boundaries of Maithili should be taken, therefore, as Bhojpurī on the West: Bengali on the East; Nepālī or Kusā on the North; and Oriyā, Santālī and Muṇḍā on the South.

The Number of Its Speakers

According to the *Linguistic Survey of India* (V. ii. p. 14), the number of people speaking Maithili in 1911 was:—

6. Ibid, pp. 13-14.

Standard Maithili ...	...	1,946,800
Southern Standard Maithili	...	2,300,000
Eastern Maithili ...	...	1,302,300
Chikā-chikī Maithili	...	1,719,781
Western Maithilī ...	...	1,783,495
Jolahā Maithili ...	...	337,000
Total	...	9,389,376

These figures do not include all the speakers of Maithili in the Nepal Tarāi. In view of the past cultural and linguistic contact between Nepal and Mithila and the inclusion of some portions of Mithila in the Kingdom of Nepal, Grierson was justified in taking at least 610,624 to be their number. Thus, in 1911 at least 10 million people spoke Maithili in the country of which it was the vernacular. The number of Maithili speakers outside the Maithili tract proper was estimated by Grierson to be 196,782 in Bengal and 66,575 in Assam. The total number of Maithili speakers according to him was, therefore, 10,263,357.

Mm. Dr. Umesha Mishra has pointed out[7] that, 6,504,817 Magahi speakers and 500,000 Pravāsī Maithils[8] should be added to this total. Thus, the total number would come to about 2 crores.

Dr. Subhadra Jha has worked out[9] the following figures for Maithili speakers in 1931 :

7. In the *Presidential Address*, Ghongdharadīhā Session of the Maithilī Sāhitya Pariṣad, 1933.

8. This number is given by another scholar also in *Mihira*, 14th September 1935 ; See also, Shashinatha Choudhari's *Mithilā Darśana*, p. 7 and Kapileshvara Jha's 'Mithilāka Upaniveśa' in *Mihira*, 1944, Ramchandra Mishra, '*Hamārā Pravāsa*' and *Brajastha Maithila Abhiyoga*, and Mevalal Jha, *Brajastha Maithila*.

9. *Formation of Maithili language*.

1.	Bihar—		
	Champaran ...	...	889,455
	Muzaffarpur ...	...	2,525,980
	Darbhanga ...	...	3,154,290
	Bhagalpur ...	...	2,041,725
	Monghyr ...	...	2,021,342
	Purnea ...	...	1,163,522
	Santhal Parganas	...	73,807
	Patna (Basti) ...	...	386,522
	Total	...	12,256,643
2.	Bengal— ...	...	324,228
3.	Other Provinces ...	...	793,276
	Grand Total	...	13,374,147

The figures for Champaran, however, should not have been included in view of the fact that today Maithili is hardly spoken there at all, while Nepalese Maithili speakers numbering in 1931 about 900,000 and Magahī speakers numbering in 1931 about 8,000,000 should have been added. Thus, we can safely say that in 1931 about 21 millions of people spoke Maithili,[10] and that in 1949 all told about two and a half crores of people speak Maithili.

10. Compare other 1931 fignres :

Indian languages

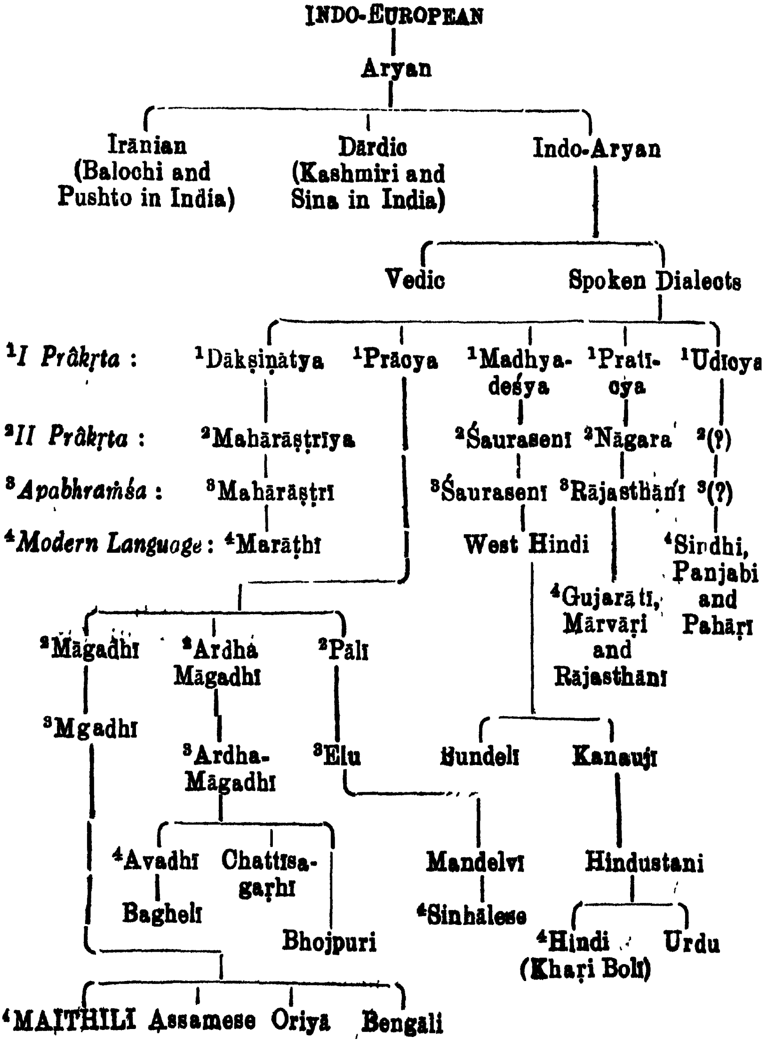
Assamese 2.00 Millions, Gujarati 10.84 Millions, Oriya 11.19 Millions, Pushto. 1.63 Millions, Punjabi 15 83 Millions, Malayalam 9.13 Millions, Sindhi 4.006 Millions, Kanarese 11.206 Millions, Telugu 26.37 Millions, Tamil 20.41 Millions, and Marathi 20.89 Millions.

World languages

Albanian 1.004 Millions, Persian 15.00 Millions, Greek 6.93 Millions, Hungarian 8.001 Millions, Bohemian 10.61 Millions, Siamese 14.50 Millions, Swedish 6.26 Millions and Turkish 14.106 Millions.

Place of Maithili in Modern Indian Languages

The following chart indicates the place of Māgadhan speeches in general in the comity of Modern Indian Languages:[11]—



11. Based mainly on Taraporewala's Classification.

The Māgadhī Prākṛta began to branch out quite early. The grammarians of Prākṛta mention amongst the varieties of Māgadhī, a Gauḍī, a Dhakkī, and an Utkalī or Oḍrī. Maithili is the direct descendant of Māgadhī (LSI V ii p. 1) and is spoken in its original home. Gauḍī was the parent of Northern Bengali and Assamese. Dhakkī (or the Māgadhī of Daccā) became modern Eastern Bengalī. Oriyā is the representative of ancient Utkalī.

Dr. S. K. Chatterji has classified Māgadhī into (1) *Eastern* (including Assamese, Bengali and Oriyā), (2) *Central* (including Maithili with Magahī), and (3) *Western* (including Bhojpuri with Nagpurī and Sadānī). Mm. Dr. Umesha Mishra, however, suggests an improvement of this classification on grounds of cultural affinities. He divides Māgadhī into (1) *North-Eastern* (Assamese) (2) *South-Eastern* (Oriyā) (3) *Central* (Bengali and Maithili) and (4) *Western* (Bhojpuri). Grierson's classification is different and faulty: for, he groups Bhojpuri with Maithili as 'Bihārī'. We shall see presently that Dr. Chatterji's contention that philologically Maithili cannot be grouped with Bhojpurī[12] and Mm. Dr. Umesha Mishra's contention that Bhojpuri has culturally received inspiration from Ardhamāgadhī and Śaurasenī languages[13] can be supported by a detailed examination—there are more points in favour of separating the two than of combining them under one heading 'Bihārī'.

The common characteristics of all Māgadhan speeches are:

12. In classifying it as Western Māgadhan (in ODBL). And see also *infra*, p. 63 f. n.

13. In classifying it as Western Māgadhan (*Presidential Address*, Ghongharaḍihā Session of Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad, 1933).

(1) *Phonetic*—tendency to turn the original अ into an ओ and the original श, ष, स into स; the epenthesis of इ is developed; preference of *r* and *rh* to ḍ and ḍh; preference of न to ण; initial य, व becomes ई, ऊ;

(2) *Inflexional*—greater tendency to inflexional synthesis; nominative in ए; many weak forms of अ-bases have also oblique forms differing from the direct ones (*e.g.* पहर and पहरा in Maithili); direct strong form of अ bases ends in आ and not in अउ or ओ; dative case in के; genitive in रा, केर, एर (रि); the agent used before past tense of transitive verb is absent; pronouns मोर, जे, से; the post-positional article टा–टी (*e.g.* कएटा in Maithili); pronominal adjective in इ (*e.g.* जेहन in Maithili);

(3) *Conjugation*—*l* in past tense, *b* in future tense; use of the affix-क in connection with the verb third person; √अछ and √थाक for the substantive verb;

(4) *Syntax*—past tenses of transitive verbs are not construed passively but actively; differentiation between transitive and intransitive in third person only; structurally more developed than Western languages.

There are, however, several characteristics which are peculiar to Maithili. It has special verbal forms with affixed and infixed pronouns; an elaborate system of honorific and other verb forms with reference to the object; the present participle -अत used for the future in the third person only; the थ affix distinguishing verb plural and singular honorific; the honorific second person pronoun अहाँ; and lastly, the use of √थिक and √अछ in addition to √हो.

Some features in Maithili are apparently foreign to Māgadhī Prākṛta. Thus, it uses *r* (for *l*, as in *hara* for *hala*) and *s* (for *ś*, as

in *desa* for *deśa*) "not only in places where they obtained in Skt. but goes a step further—it changes Skt. ś and ṣ also to *s*, and single inter-vocal *l* is changed to *r*. *J* occurs in all places except in tsm. words where there was *y* in Skt., if it was not fully vocalised and assimilated with the neighbouring vowel. Examples of such changes are found in Maithili of all periods."[14]

Dr. Subhadra Jha has discussed these points elaborately.[15] He shows that ल, ड, ड़ and र sounds were confused in Mithila. As for dental स, he points out that something midway between श and स for all sibilants is represented by the sign for palatal sibilant which is used for all sibilants in the popular Kaithī script. It is possible, however, as Dr. U. Mishra obsesves,[16] the vogue of Pālı in the neighbourhood of Mithila might have influenced the change of Māgadhan श into Maithili स. Indeed, Dr. Chatterji considers that the vogue of श for all sibilants in Māgadhı itself was only apparent among persons of lower ranks. Lastly, the deviation of Maithili from Māgadhı in regard to य can be understood if the existence of an intermediate sound between य and ज is recognised and if the fact that most Brāhmaṇas of Mithila are Śukla-Yajurvedins where य has two pronunciations (य and ज) is taken into consideration.

Maithili—an Independent Language

Till quite recently Maithili was classed either as a dialect of Bengali or that of Hindi —it was supposed to have no independent exis-

14. Dr. Subhadra Jha in *Formation of Maithili Language.*

15. Ibid.

16. Introduction to his edition of Manabodha's *Kṛṣṇa-janma* and his *Presidential Address* to Maithili Śaili Nirdhāraṇa Samiti, Muzaffarpur, 1936.

tence. Grierson first emphatically declared that far from being a dialect of Hindi or Bengali, it is in every way entitled to be treated as an independent form of speech.[17] It has several features of affinity with both Hindi and Bengali, but at the same time it has such elements in it as are wanting not only in these but in almost all the Indo-Aryan languages. "This is the case especially in conjugation. Here it stands aloof from all in following very scrupulously the complex rules regarding the honorific and the non-honorific sense as well and about the use of the appropriate personal terminations indicative of the person of both the subject and the object. So it is really an independont language and cannot be included in either Hindi or Bengali as one of the dialects of these languages on the basis of (*vocabulary or that of*) intelligibility only. All these languages being of Sanskrit origin, naturally have in them a predominance of words of Sanskritic origin. Mostly they are common to all. Needless to say, however, that there are words which mean one thing in one language and another in others."[18]

If one were however, to group Maithili with some other language, it would go rather with Bengali than with Hindi. Says Grierson, "it was much more nearly allied to Bengali (*group*) than to the Hindi (*group*) of the North Western Provinces (*modern U. P.*)."[19] "Like Bengali, Oṛiyā and Assamese, it is a direct descendant, perhaps the most direct of the descendants, of the old form of speech known as Māgadhī Prākrit, and has so much in common with them in its inflexional system that it would almost be

17. *Maithili Grammar*, 1882, p. 2, JRASB XIV (1885) p. 186 f. n. 16, 18 and 19, and LSI V ii, p. 1. 18,

18. Dr. Subhadra Jha, *Op. cit.*, pp. 31-32,

19. LSI V ii p. 18,

possible to make one grammar for all the four languages."[20]

In order to make the position of Maithili clear an attempt is made below to study its relation with other cognate languages:

(1) Maithili and Bengali

Bengali has been in the closest contact with Maithili. The origin of Bengali language shows that ancient Bengali and ancient Maithili had practically no differences—so much so that works in one language could be easily mistaken for those of the other language. The intercourse between the two language areas was very great during the medieval period. For about four centuries (15th to 18th) Maithila scholars taught Bengali scholars and when, later on Nadia became the centre of Sanskrit learning, Maithila scholars were taught by Bengali scholars. Politically also Mithila and Bengal remained under the same influences till 1911. Naturally, therefore, Maithili has been read and understood in perhaps no other foreign area more widely than in Bengal. While Modern Maithili literature can bear no comparison with Modern Bengali literature, the Early and Middle Periods of Maithili literature literally "made" Bengali language and literature.[21]

Most of the strikingly common and uncommon features of Bengali and Maithili have been incidently noticed above.[22] In pronunciation and intonation Maithili occupies a

20. LSI V ii, p. 1.

21. *Vide* Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Introduction to *Varṇaratnākara*, p. xxi and R. C. Dutta, *Bengali Literature* as quoted by Dr. U. Mishra in his *Presidential Address*, Ghongharaḍīhā, Mai, Sa. Pd.

22. While drawing attention to the common features of Magadhan languages above, p. 45. More details in LSI V ii pp. 1-3.

middle place between Bengali and Hindi.[23] The short अ of Maithili, and in general its short vowels and unvoiced nasal vowels, (especially the frequent ॠ and the candrabindu), and the ए's are unknown to Bengali. The stress on the initial syllable in Bengali is not found in Maithili, its stress falls on different syllables.

As regards morphology, there are several common features in declension of nouns. Both have equally weak sense of number and gender in the conjugation of verbs. Of course, "Maithili becomes distinct from Bengali by the use of 'future in *t(a)* in the third person and by a very complex conjugation of verb, which is so uniform and so simple in Bengali".[24]

(2) Maithili and Assamese

Assamese is the only Aryan language spoken in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam.

The boundaries of ancient kingdoms of Kāmarūpa and Mithila were co-terminus on the Kośi river in district Purnea. Ancient Kamarūpa comprised till the 16th century modern Assam, Cooch Behar, Jalapāiguḍi and Rangpur.[25]

In the *Kálikápurána* (c. 700-1000) a detailed account is given of the earliest ruler of Kāmarūpa—Narakāsura. It is related that Naraka was brought up by Janaka, king of Mithila, before he went to conquer—"to Aryanize" ?—Kāmarūpa.[26]

23. *E.g.* in the pronounciation of vowel 'a'. LSI V ii p. 2.

24. Dr. Subhadra Jha, *Formation of Maithili Language.*

25. See Chapter I above f. n. 9.

26. For a discussion on him, see Mr. Mankand's article in JKAMARUPA X 3, 4; J. Mishra's "Historical Notes on Narakāsura and Bhagadatta," in JKAMARUPA XI 1, 2; and B. K. Kakati, *The Mother Goddess of Kâmâkhyâ*, p. 25 ff.

During the early years of the Christian Era we have the famous copper-plate grant of the Kāmarupa ruler Bhāskaravarman and his ancestor Mahābhutivarman to Maithila Brāhmaṇas on the banks of Kośī:

> "His ancestor Mahābhutivarman crossed the Karatoyā early in the fifth century A. C. and conquered a part of Eastern Mithilā and Morung and in order to commemorate his conquest made the grant of lands within the conquered area to (*Maithila*) Brahmans"......"It seems that till Susthitavarman (9th and 10th decades of 6th century A. C.) it remained under the Kāmar upa kings. Bhāskarvarman assisted by Śri Harśa acquired it again in the first quarter of the Seventh century, and he issued a charter confirming the grant made by his ancestor."[27]

Many Maithils went to Kāmarupa during the reign of Vishu Singh of Coch-Behar (c. 1493 ?) He invited one Sārvabhauma Maithila Brahmaṇa to be his priest. Kāyasthas also went there, and, we are told, one Narahari Kāyastha became the Prime Minister of the State. Narahari's son Payonidhi also held this post. His son Kavındrapātra introduced Kulinism among the Kāyasthas of Assam on the same lines as in Mithila. Of course, later on, Kavındrapātra's family usurped the throne, and it is alleged that it holds it even today in the Gaurıpura-Rāj.[28]

In the Tripurā-Raj also many Maithila musicians and scholars were invited from Mithila, especially during the reign of Dhanyamāṇikya (died 1515).[29]

The introduction of Maithili language by Śankara Deva (1449—1568) and other Brajāvalı

27. *Ind an Culture*, I, p. 427 ff.

28. See *Social History of Kāmarupa* by N. N. Vasu, II, p. 168 ; also *Vibhūti's* (Bhādaba, 1343 Sāla) I, vii, p. 15,

29. Cf. *Rājamālā*, a Bengali work, quoted in N. N. Vasu's "Hindi Viśvakoṣa" Vol VIII p. 46,

Vaiṣṇava writers no less than the earlier Śākta and Tāntrika unity of culture during and after the decline of Buddhism have bound Mithila and Kāmarūpa in very close ties. Assamese Brāhmaṇas follow Maithila smṛtis and almanacs in religious and social matters[30] though we are told that Pītāmbara Siddhānta Vāgīśā, the premier Assamese Lawgiver, makes very derogatory remarks on Maithila nibandhakāras.[31]

These factors make it easy to understand the great contact that has been between Assam and Mithila for ages.

With regard to the origin of Assamese language it may be noted that in the old controversy of Assamese *versus* Bengali, Grierson pointed out that the claim of Assamese as an independent language was established by the fact that modern Assamese "comes (*directly*), from Bihar, through Northern Bengal (*formerly in Kámrupa kingdom*), not through Bengal proper".[32]

Rai Bahadur K. L. Barua says:

> "Yuan Chwang in 7th century A.D. found that the dialect of Kāmarupa differed only a little from that of Magadha...... The Kāmarupa dialect was originally a variety of eastern Maithili, and it was no doubt the spoken Aryan language through out the kingdom which then included the whole of the Assam Valley and the whole of North Bengal with the addition of the Purnea district of Bihar. It is not, therefore, at all strange that the language of the Buddhist Dohas composed in Kāmarupa during the 10th and 11th centuries should be a mixed Maithili-Kāmarupi language, bearing close resemblance to modern Assamese, the direct

30. See Dr. Mishra's article in *Vibhūti* (Agahana, 1343 Sāla) I, x, p. 3.

31. JKAMARUPA X 3-4 p. 70.

32. LSI I. i. p. 156 and IA March 1896 See also ODBL p. 79.

offspring of the old Kamarupi dialect. Perhaps the *Dohâs* were composed in a language which could be easily understood throughout Eastern India."[33]

The variations between modern Assamese and modern Maithili will appear to be many—especially in phonology. But in morphology there are some important similarities. For instance, both have double causative suffixes in form and meaning; extended forms of past future tense (having imperative, practicative force) in East Assamese and Maithili add *ilihi* and *ibihi*; and such Assamese forms as दिलाक, गेल, उठि, करि राख correspond with Maithili forms as देलक, गेल, उठि, करि राख (or कए राख).

Many words which Maithili speaking people would recognize as their own are found in Assamese in the same sense, of course, often in a little altered garb. A few of then may be noted: भाश्रो (acting), बनिज (trade), पाँजर (flank), खजुली (itches), दरमाहा (pay), कुसिआर (sugar-cane), वस्तु (thing), लग (near), कल (Machine) उपार (dig up), भूइँ (earth-colloquial Maithili), राति (night), पथार (medow; cf. खेतापथार Maithili), कमार (blacksmith), दालिम (दाड़िम) (pomegranate), पिच्छल (पिच्छर Maithili—slippery), घिउ (clarified butter) सेप (phlegm—Assamese; saliva--Maithili), बुधिआक (Assamese for clever=बुधिआर in Maithili); अउँठी (ring).

(3) *Maithili and Oriyá*

Unlike Dr. Chatterjee, Mm. Dr. U Mishra separates Oriyā from Bengali on the ground that the political and cultural domination of the Dravidians has been so great over Orissa that it has really lost its former bonds of kinship with other Māgadhan languages. Indeed, "the language of the original inhabitants of Orissa was Dravidian" and though later on it

33. *Early History of Kâmarupa*, p. 318.

came under the influence of Pāli and Prākṛta, and Modern Oriyā originated largely from Magadhī Prakṛta, yet its continued subordination to Telang Kings for eight centuries and then to the Bhonslas of Nagpur for fifty years or so, left very little chance of its development in the manner of other Māgadhan languages.

It is, however, not a daughter but a sister of Bengali, though till recently some "Calcutta Pandits" continued to claim it as a dialect of Bengali.

In spite of these facts, Maithili has certain points of similarity with Oriyā. For example, in phonology:

(*a*) "In Oriyā single MIA *l* was changed to *l* by cerebralisation while it was changed to *l* in early Maith. and became *r* or *r* in later Mai ... Except in the pronunciation of the cerebrals and the *r* of skt. tsm. words, all sounds of the two languages are pronounced in the same way, as distinct from Bengali or Assamese."[34]

(*b*) "In Bengali the second element of a dissimilar conjunct consonant is not pronounced but the first element is doubled. In Mai. and Or. both of them are distinctly pronounced. Thus *Ātmā* is *ātā* in Beng. but the Sans. pronunciation is preserved (*restored?*) in these two languages".[35]

(*c*) "In the matter of stress, Mai. agrees with Or. in stressing the last long vowel. But this cannot be put on any vowel which will occur before the third syllable from the end. In case all the vowels are short, the penultimate one will get the accent. Oriyā does not possess the very short vowels; which Mai. does. The rule of shortening of the pre-accentual syllable does not hold good in Oriyā..... ...."[36]

Indeed, Maithili agrees with Oriyā in phonology much more closely than Bengali does; with Oriyā in morphology.

34. Dr. Subhadra Jha, *Op. cit.*

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

(4) *Maithili and "Bihari"*

"All round the outer edge of Aryan India is a circle of kingdoms or provinces, Bengal, Orissa, Mahārāshtra, Gujarāt, Sindh, Pañjāb, Nepāl; and the "Indian", or, as the Muhammadans called it, the Hindi, spoken in each of these places came by degrees to be called Bengali, Oriyā, Marathi and so on.

"But in the Centre there remained a vast area for which no special name was found: it was merely Hindi and its language or languages were all merely Hindi. It has long been known that under the general term were included forms of speech differing very widely from each other, and it only remained for some scholar to enquire into the subject and classify these various forms, referring them to their proper relationship. Mr. Grierson has done this for the Eastern part of the hitherto undefined area, and he has therefore a perfect right to give a name to the form of speech whose independence he has successfully established."[37]

This was the so-called "Biharī" language which is associated with Grierson's name. He thought Biharı to include three speeches– Bhojpuri, Maithili and Magahai. Today, we find that this nomenclature has been the cause of considerable difficulty in the growth and development of the Maithili language.

Grierson's nomenclature was mischievous inasmuch as it grouped two widely different speeches (viz. Bhojpuri and Maithili) in it. We have seen above and shall see below in the section on "Maithili and Bhojpuri" that Bhojpuri is emphatically 'U. P. ian' (Hindustani) language rather than 'Biharī'. Now, Bhojpuri having *in total* very much greater number of speakers than Maithili *in total*, naturally led other philologists and historians to classify this 'Biharı' as one of the dialects of "U. P. ian" (Hindustani) language. Secondly, by inventing this 'Biharı', Magahi was given a false place,

37. From a review of Grierson's *Bihari Grammars* noted in the 887 Edn. Vol. VII, p. 17. (Beams in IA July 1,1885).

though Grierson would himself have required it to be classed under the true Biharī language (*i. e.* under Maithili). Lastly, he was thus unconsciously giving Maithili the status of a mere dialect, though he was successful in his main object of finally showing that Maithili was not a dialect of Bengali and was very much different from Bengali. It may be concluded, therefore, that this Biharī was born at the hands of Sir George Grierson and that there is not yet any common literary form for the basic Biharī and that it is culturally and even linguistically not a sound invention.

'Biharī' is, however, also supposed to indicate a hybrid form of Hindustani which is made current by the Avadhi-speaking Musalmans of Bihar. Says Grierson :

> "The Musalmans speak it as their vernacular language over the greater portion of the area in which "Bihari" is the vernacular of the main portion of the population. This bilingual area extends as far east as the District of Muzaffarpur. This Musalman dialect is an interesting survival of the influence of the former Muhammadan Court of Lucknow. It is frequently heard by Europeans in Bihar as it is used as a kind of language of politeness by uneducated non-Musalmans of the same country, much as Urdu is used by their betters."[38]

This is, however, only a "spoken" language and has no serious claims to be a literary vehicle. Perhaps this is the Bihari of which Dr. Sachchidananda Sinha speaks.[39]

A third connotation of "Biharī" is the most scientific one. It means 'Maithili' along with 'Magahī'. For, what after all is the modern province of Bihar ? It is the United Provinces

38. LSI V. ii. p. 404.

39. *Modern Review*, June 1941, p. 678, opinion quoted by Dr. A. Jha.

of Mithila and Magadha—the remaining portions are mainly the strip of land in the west which belongs to the Ancient province of Kāśī (now corresponding to the Bhojpuri speaking tract), and the "aborginal" areas. This strip of land should stand with the province where the greater portion of the Ancient Kāśī province has been put (*i. e.* with the U. P. districts of Ghazipur, Ballia, Gorakhpur, Azamgarh, Jaunpur, Benares, Fyzabad, Basti, and so on).

"Maithili and Magahī" have practically everything in common as we shall see below. Therefore, *if at all* we want to stick to the term 'Bihārī', it can be used only for "Maithili and Magahī" taken together.[40]

(a) *Maithili and Magahi*

Magahi is the name given to the dialect of Ancient Magadha, which lies in the south of

40. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji writes to me regarding this point as follows :

"If that could happen (that is, if Magahiyas could accept Maithili as their literary form) then the linguistic situation of Bihar would be very much simplified: and Maithili and Magahi then together will form *the Bihari* language. I fear so long as the name Maithili is there the Magahi people may not feel as enthusiastic about it. Maithili intellectuals at Patna should at once get in touch with Magahi intellectuals, and together you may start calling Maithili-Magahi as a single speech—*Bihari*. ...... No better name (acceptable equally to the Magahiyas) than Bihari suggests itself to me now ; this Bihari in a specialised sense will really mean Maithili, just as Rajasthani really means Marwari, when we take note of the literary importance of the Rajasthani speeches and dialects. There is a good deal in a name—whatever good old Shakespeare may say. Bhojpuri has developed an individuality of its own, and it has deviated a good deal (or rather its development has been independently achieved) from the Central Magadhan—I have classed it separately as Western Magadhan

Mithila. It is spoken in parts of Monghyr, Hazaribagh, Bhagalpur, Patna and Palamu districts. According to some scholars Magahı should be taken to be a form of the 'Language of Madhyadeśa' on the ground that in certain Buddhist texts Magadha is described to be in 'Madhyadeśa'. But, as we have seen in Chapter I, this connotation of 'Madhyadeśa' is a distortion of facts. Magadha has been predominantly a 'Prācyadeśa' (though Tibetan Geography seems to exclude it) and its dialect a 'Prācya dialect'. Magahı is in a way the most direct remnant of the Ancient Māgadhı Prākṛta, and, though since the Muslim conquest its indigenous learning has been eclipsed under the influence of Hindustan (the U. P.), yet, Magadha has continued to be distinctly a non-U. P.-ian area.

The texture of Magahī is identical with that of Maithili. The most important feature is that both have verbs incorporating pronouns देखलिऔक-देखलथिन्ह-देखलहुन्हि. So says Grierson :

> "On the whole Magahi grammar closely follows that of Maithili. The two main distinguishing points are, first, the use of the two tenses just mentioned, and, second, the form of the Verb Substantive which is 'hī' (I am) instead of the very common Maithili 'chhī'."[41]

The two tenses referred to are (1) the present indefinite (Maithili, *dekhai-chi*, Magahī, *dekha-hi*) and (2) the past indefinite (Maithili, *dekhalahun*, Magahī *dekhahalun*). These differences, however, seem to be very insignificant on a little consideration. For, in colloquial speech Maithili *chi* or *achi* may be pronounced as *ahi* or *hi*—a natural phonetic change. Similarly, the verbal form *dekhahalun* in Magahī is an obvious transposition—natural for unlettered persons—of Maithili *dekhalahun*. Most of these

41. LSI V ii p. 36.

forms are found among the unlettered speakers of Standard Maithili too.

> "In fact", concludes Grierson, "the principal difference between it and Maithili is that the latter has been under the influence of (a people who have been known for their learning) for centuries, while the former has been the language of a people who have been dubbed boors since Vedic times."[42]

Magahi might, therefore, "very easily be classed as ...dialect of Maithili rather than as a separate dialect"

(b) *Maithili and Bhojpuri*

With reference to Bhojpuri it may be repeated that it "belongs rather to the U. P. than to Bihar".[44] Dr. S. K. Chatterji supporting this conclusion of Grierson, says :

> "Bhojpuriyā territory (*Ancient Kāśi Janapada*) has always been under the influence of the West, and Western forms of speech, like Braj-Bhākhā, and Avadhi, and literary Hindustani (*Hindi and Urdu*) in later times, have been cultivated by poets and others."[45]

Indeed, Grierson, who committed the mistake of calling Bhojpuri a dialect of Bihar, himself observes that so far as literary traditions go Bhojpuri belongs to the West. He says :

> "It was from its neighbourhood that the famous Bundelkhand heroes Alhā and Udan, traced their origin, and all its associations and traditions point to the West and not to the East."[46]

It may be further pointed out on the basis

42. LSI V ii p. 34.
43. Ibid, p. 4.
44. LSI V ii p. 40.
45. ODBL I, p. 99.
46. LSI V ii p. 40.

of the *Linguistic Survey*,[47] that Bhojpuri speakers in Bihar number less than 6,691766 out of the 25,500,000 'Bihari' speakers of Bihar. On the other hand, "Maithili—Magahi" speakers, in Bihar number about three times as much.

Besides, of the total Bhojpuri speakers in India (=20,412,608), those in Bihar and Orissa (=6,691,766) are far less in number than those in the U. P. where their number exceeds 10,085,171.[48] Even in area, Bhojpuri speakers are spread in only five districts of Bihar, while they cover over ten districts in the U. P.[49]

Bhojpuri is, in fact, known as "Madhesi" or the language of 'Madhyadeśa' (the U. P.) in Champaran district, when distinguished from Maithili which is also known there.

Philologically also there are several features in Bhojpuri which bring it nearer to the vernacular of the U. P. (Hindi) than to Maithili.[50]

47-49. LSI V ii pp, 5, 14-16, and 32-34 give total figures ; pp. 54,95,106, 186,44,248, 23 ,311 give district-wise figures. Bhojpuri is spoken by 20,412,608 persons, in the U. P. districts of Ballia, Ghazipur, Gorakhpur, Azamgarh, Fyzabad, Jaunpur, Benares, Mirzapur, Basti, Baharaich and Gonda ; and in the Bihar districts of Champaran, Shahabad, Palamau, Saran, Ranchi (and Jashpur State) ; and by about 300,000 persons in Nepal Terai and about 412,608 persons outside.

50. (1) In *Pronunciation*: Bhojpuri is pronounced with "the sharp cut tone clearly distinguished as long (with *aw* of *awl* added at times), which we hear all over in Hindostani area" (LSI V ii pp. 41-42.)

(2) *Plurals* : Its nominative plurals by adding *ni*, *nha*, *na*. are like those of Avadhi *ne*, *vana*, *-vane*, *ina*.

(3) *In Declension of Nouns:* It ends in oblique form in *e*, like Avadhi ; the Dative—Accusative post-position is *kâ*, like *kâ* and *Bade* in Avadhi ; Bhojpuri post-positions *se*, *te*, *sante*, *le* compare with *se*, *sang*, *seng* of Eastern Hindi.

(4) Such forms as मैं (=I, Avadhi मैं) ; तूँ, तैं (=thou, Avadhi तैं तूँ,) ; ई (that) ; ऊ (that) ; जे, जवन, जौन (who) ; से, तवन,

We may here confine ourselves to the

के, कवन, कौन, मो तो, *eh* (*ehi*), *oh*, *o*, *ohi* (that); *te* (that); *tora* (gen.); जेकर; तेकर; '*U*' spelt as *Vahî*; *Kucha*; all these are common to Avadhi and Bhojpuri.

(5) Common features in the conjugation of verbs between the two are:

Auxiliary Verbs

1. 1st form—present tense √बाट

masculine 2nd person बाटे (Av.) बाड़े. (Bhoj.)

feminine „ बाटिस (Both)

masculine 3rd person बाटैं (A) बाड़न (BH)

feminine „ बाटीं (A) बाड़ीं (BH)

2. 1st form—past tense √रह

1st person रहेउँ (A) रहलाँ (BH); रहों, रहीं (2nd form BH)

2nd person *rahis* (A) *rahalas* (BH, masculine)
rahalis (BH, feminine)
2nd form BH, *rahas* (masculine)
„ *rahis* (feminine)

3rd person feminine *rahî* (A) *rahalî* (BH)
„ „ masculine *rahis* (A) *rahalasî* (BH)
2nd form BH *rahas*, *rahasi* (mas. sing.)
rahin (mas. pl.)
„ *rahin* (fem. pl)

3. *-in*, *-en* etc. for plural past tense in both.

Finite Verbs

1. Present tense √देख

1st person sing. mas. देखौं, देखउँ (A), देखों (BH)

„ „ pl. mas. देखी (A) देखीं (BH)

2nd person sing. mas. *dekha*, *dekhas* (Both)

2. Past tense

1st person sing mas. देखलों (Both)

2nd person sing. mas. *dekhulas* (Both)

3. Future tense

1st person देखबों (BH) देखबं (A)

2nd persan *dekhabe* (sing.), *dekhabû*(*o*) (fem.) (Both)

3rd person देखिहें (Both)

striking points of differences between Bhojpuri

4. Past Conditional
   3rd person mas. sing. *dekhat* (Both)
   „ fem. pl. *dekhatiu* (Both)

5. "The past tense with the........................ending in *is*, *es* or *yas* (according to local spellings) is pre-eminently the typical shibboleth of a speaker of Eastern Hindi. In conversation this form of a verb naturally occurs with great frequency, and is hence continually heard." (LSI VI p. 5). Now, since this is as true of Bhojpuri as of Avadhi and since *karis* and *maris* forms are "relics of a mixture of Śaurasenī and Māgadhi Prakrit" (LSI VI p. 5) and indicate the Ardhamāgadhi origin of Avadhi, therefore, Bhojpuri may also be treated as one of the Ardhamāgadhan speeches (like Eastern Hindi etc.).

6. Moreover, in the third person future while Maithili (along with Magahi) uses the present participle somewhat clumsily, holding the *ba*, Bhojpuri "takes refuge in the *ih*-future which we (meet) in the Śaurasenī dialects, so that we have a curious spectacle of a future in which the first two persons are really impersonal passives (-'*itavyaṁ*', *like the Māgadhan languages*) while the third person is active (-'*iṣyati*', *like the Śaurasenī languages*)........... Eastern Hindi goes still further in the same direction. The Awadhi dialect closely agrees with Bhojpuri in this :

Sing.	*Plural*
मारबं	मार'ब
मारबेस	मारबो
मारिहै	मारिहैं

As we go West, Awadhi definitely takes *hi* in 1st, 2nd and 3rd persons and becomes identical with Brajbhāṣā." (LSI VI p. 7.).

Thus in the "*is* etc." of the past tense and in the "*ih*" of the future tense Bhojpuri along with Eastern Hindi seems to occupy an intermediate position between the Māgadhan languages of the East and the Śauraseni languages of the West (LSI VI p. 7). Therefore, we can say, that though Bhojpuri may agree generally in regard to its nouns and pronouns with the Māgadhi or Eastern group of vernaculars, yet in regard to the verb

and Maithili[51] :

1. *Phonology*—the vowel *a* is pronuunced in Bhojpurī with the clear sharp cut tone of the U. P. and not in the round fashion of the East.

2. *Morphology*—(*i*) *Number*—plural is formed in Maithili like Bengalī, etc., whereas in Bhojpurī it is formed by adding *ne*, *ve*, *vana*, *vane* and *ina*, like Avadhī *ni*, *nha*, and *na*.

(*ii*) *Declension* & (*iii*) *Conjugation*—the favourite Bhojpurī post-position of the genitive is *ke*, while in the Eastern languages it is either *ka* or *kara* or *kera*. Besides this, the genitive of a Bhojpurī substantive has an oblique form unknown to Maithili. As regards pronouns Bhojpurī has a word for 'Your Honour', *viz*. *ráure* which does not occur in Maithili. In the conjugation of verbs the Bhojpurī verb substantive *báte* does not appear in Maithili. In the finite verb, Bhojpurī has a present tense *dekhilá* which is not found in any form in Maithili.

it occupies a position intermediate between that group and the Śauraseni group, whose habitat is immediately to the west, and that it is very much near the modern representative of the ancient Ardhamāgadhī Prākṛta. There are, of course, quite many differences between Bhojpuri and Avadhi, but Western Bhojpuri—the largest group of Bhojpuri—is frequently called *Purbi par excellence* often including Avadhi. (See LSI VI p. 43).

Cf. also 'डा० सुनीति कुमार चटर्जी का कथन है कि मैथिली और मगही को भोजपुरी के साथ एक कोष्ठ में रखकर तीनों को एक "बिहारी" भाषा के अन्तर्गत रख देना गलत है, क्योंकि मगही और मैथिली मागधी अपभ्रंश से निकली है और उनका हिन्दी से कोई सम्बन्ध नहीं है परन्तु भोजपुरी अर्धमागधी से निकली है और कोसली के बहु अधिक निकट है।"

—शिवदानसिंह चौहान in "प्रगतिवाद" p. 249.

51. Most of the facts given here (as also those in f. n. 50) are based on LSI.

Finally, Bhojpurī has cast aside all the maze of verbal forms in Maithili depending upon the person of, or the degree of respect to be shown to, the object.

(iv) Cultural and Ethnic—The grammatical complexity is the result of the conservatism of Maithili Magahī speakers and its simplicity that of the simple practical character of the Bhojpurī speakers. (See LSI V ii p. 4.)

This does not mean that there are no points of similarity. Dr. S. K. Chatterji has pointed out similarities between Maithili and Bhojpurī grammars, but most of them are mainly due to their territorial contiguity :

(1) 'the weakening of long vowels when words are extended or compounded through reasons of stress." (2) "Dental pronunciation of the old Māgadhī palatal sibilant, although written *śa* in the Kaithī..." (3) "*r* for Māgadhī *l* " (4) "3, sometimes 4, forms for the same noun with preference for the *awā* and *auwā* forms..." (5) "an oblique form in *-e* for nouns often retained." (6) "genitive of nouns in .. *ka*, of pronouns in *kara* and *karā*" (7) dative (? ablative) in *se*. (8) locative in मे (9) Verb forms "*-al*, *-ab* and not *-il*, *-ib*." (10) "a verbal noun in *-al-*"[53]

(5) *Maithili and Hindi*

Maithili has had a very chequered career: at first under the suzerainty of Bengalī it found itself in the Eighties brought under that of Hindi. The philological reasons which are advanced to class Maithili under Hindi (*e.g.*, prevalence of ड for ण; use of मे in locative; shortening of vowels when a word is extended or compounded etc.) are also the points in which Maithili agrees with Bhojpurī. It seems, therefore, that the contiguity of Bhojpurī with Maithili has gone a long way to create the

53. OBDL I, p. 96.

impression that Maithili along with Bhojpuri and Eastern Hindi (Avadhi) dialects forms a part of Hindī. After we have seen the differences between the cultural and literary tradition of Bhojpuri and Maithili speaking areas, it is needless to say that this has been an unfortunate impression. Generally speaking, however, Hindi is different from Maithili in all those features in which Śauraseni Prakṛta differed from Magadhī Prākṛta.[53]

Another ground on which Maithili has been classed as a dialect of Hindi is the inter-communicability between Maithili and Hindi speakers. Even if this contention was wholly correct—as is not the case—Maithili could remain an independent language. For, rightly says Grierson :

> "This is not an essential difference especially in considering the Aryan languages of North India. For, between Bengal and the Punjab, including even Rajputana, the Central India and Gujarat, every individual who receives the very slightest education is bilingual. In his home and in his own immediate surroundings he speaks a local idiom, but in his intercourse with strangers he employs or understands some form of that great *lingua franca*—Hindi or Hindustani. Moreover, over the whole of this vast area the great mass of the vocabulary, including nearly all the words in common use, is, allowing for variations of pronunciation, the same."[54]

Thirdly, the adoption of late of Devanāgarī script in print has curiously supported the impression that Maithili is only a form of Hindi. Indeed, it is forgotten or tacitly put in the background that Maithili has also its

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53. See Dr. Sudhakar Jha, "Maithilika Viṣaya—me dui śabda" (MITHILANKA p. 68) and Jayakanta Mishra "Maithili and Hindi" (*Allahabad University Magazine*, February 1944).

54. LSI Vol. I. i, pp. 22-23.

own script. Dr. S. K. Chatterji rightly observes:

"The fact that till recently Maithili types were never cast and no books were ever printed from Maithili types is partly responsible for the language itself being in the shade. A Maithili boy of the upper classes is taught the Maithili alphabet, and Maithil Brahmans and others usually employ this alphabet in writing but in printing Devanagari is ordinarily used. The result of the influence of this literature printed in Devanagari, combined with the compulsory study of Hindi in the schools to the exclusion of the mother tongue and its script, has been that the knowledge of the native script is becoming more and more restricted."[55]

Other reasons why there has been a decline of Tirhuta and the consequent rise of Devanāgarī are: (1) the desire to have a common script (Devanāgarī) for the whole of India, being the greatest gift of the British rule, and the association of Sanskrit (the Devavāṇī), the Indian Language *par excellence*, with it; (2) the example of Gujarati and Marathi which adopted it; (3) the use of Kaithī (a corrupt form of Devanāgarī), among Magahī speakers and the lower classes of Maithili speakers; (4) and the official and unofficial vogue of light literature (esp. novels and journals) in Hindi and the absence of printed light literature in Maithili script. Therefore, when revival of Maithili came and the press came to be used for printing purposes, it found the reading public more ready to understand and use the Devanāgarī. The result of all this has been, as shown above by Dr. Chatterji, that Maithils of the present generation are increasingly obliged to use Devanāgarī. The older generation and the more respectable section of society, however, still write in Tirhutā. With the establishment of Mithilākṣara Prakāśana Prabandhikā Samiti, with the recognition

55. Introduction, *Varṇa-Ratnākara*, p

given to Maithili in its home University and with the concentration of all aspects of reawakening and rejuvination in Mithila in the language problem there has been a fresh interest in Tirhutā in recent years. A fount of Maithili types has been cast and a little literature has been printed in that but it seems that Devanāgarī has definitely by now ousted the Maithili script, the latter being occasionally employed as reminding the Maithils of their independent and proud cultural history.

Maithili is the only recognized native literary vernacular of Mithila, though undoubtedly in recent times owing to several factors Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and even English are also widely read and cultivated. It is strange in the light of this, to find scholars patronisingly recommending the ultimate adoption of Hindi in preference to Maithili.[56]

II

THE MAITHILI SCRIPT (TIRHUTA)

Its Name

The script of Maithili, now variously known as 'Maithili Lipi', 'Mithilākṣara', or 'Maithilakṣara', is properly called as 'Tirhuta', though some uninformed people have dubbed it as 'a corruption of Bengali' or as 'Ojha Script used in Behar chiefly by Ojha Brahmins'.[57] The name 'Tirhutā' shows that the script was fully developed when 'Tīrabhukti' had become the popular name for the country. Earlier probably it was taken either generically as 'Māgadhī script'

56. Such as, Dr. Babu Ram Saksena (the President of the Non-Local Languages Section, All-India Oriental-Conference, December 22, 1941).

57. *E.g.*, in *Specimens of Various Vernacular Characters*

of as the Buddhist work *Lalita-Vistara*, has it, the 'Vaidehi' script.[58]

Its History

The growth and development of Tirhuta has seldom been discussed in detail. From the time when the Eastern Alphabet begins to appear distinctly, "Dr. Buhler's work ceases to be exhaustive and does not deal with Eastern variety forms of the Northern Alphabet, separately..." The differentiation is made only in the case of Śaradā alphabet which is already a "separate unit in the 8th century A. D., and in a much later period in the case of proto-Bengali."[59]

The Maithili alphabet

> "is derived from an Eastern alphabet current in what is now Eastern United Provinces, Eastern Central Provinces, Behar, Orissa, and Bengal and Assam, from the 6th century onwards", and which, in its turn, "is a variety of the Gupta script (400 550 A.D.) which is a sort of cursive development through the intermediate Kuśāna writing, of the primitive and monumental Brāhmī, the mother of all the national Indian alphabets." "Mss. written in this cursive form of the Eastern alphabet, dating from the 7th century, the Mss. preserved in the temple of Horiuzi in Japan, have been found."[60]

> "This cursive Eastern alphabet is the immediate source of (1) Bengali-Assamese (2) Maithili and Oriya alphabets. (1) and (2) are practically identical; almost all the forms in (2) are found in old Mss written in (1). In fact, Sanskrit Mss in Maithili characters used to be read quite easily by Bengali Pandits, to whom these characters were known as *tirute*...... In Magadha the same alphabet

Passing Through the Post Office in India, compiled in 1877 by C. W. Hutchinson, Dec. 1877.

58. *Vide* Jivanatha Raya "Maithili Lipi" (MITHILANKA II, p. 27).

59. R. D. Banerji, *Origin of Bengali Script*, p. 88.

60. Chatterji, ODBL I, pp. 224-225.

TIRHUTA AND SOME OTHER SCRIPTS

Tirhutā (Maithili)	Bangalā	Assamese	Oriyā	Kaithī	Devāksara (Devanāgarī)	Roman
𑒁	অ	অ	ଅ	𑂃	अ अ	a
𑒂	আ	আ	ଆ	𑂄	आ आ	ā
𑒃	ই	ই	ଇ	𑂅	इ	i
𑒄	ঈ	ঈ	ଈ	𑂆	ई	ī
𑒅	উ	উ	ଉ	𑂇	उ	u
𑒆	ঊ	ঊ	ଊ	𑂈	ऊ	ū
𑒇	ঋ	ঋ	ଋ	ऋ	ऋ	ṛ
𑒈	ৠ	ৠ	ୠ	ॠ	ॠ	ṝ
𑒉	ঌ	ঌ	ଌ	ऌ	ऌ	lṛ
𑒊	ৡ	ৡ	ୡ	ॡ	ॡ	lṝ
𑒋	এ	এ	ଏ	𑂉	ए	ē
𑒌	ঐ	ঐ	ଐ	𑂊	ऐ	ai
𑒍	ও	ও	ଓ	𑂋	ओ	o
𑒎	ঔ	ঔ	ଔ	𑂌	औ	au
𑒁𑓀	অং	অং	ଅଂ	𑂃𑂁	अं	(ang)
𑒁𑓁	অঃ	অঃ	ଅଃ	𑂃𑂂	अः	aḥ
𑒏	ক	ক	କ	𑂍	क	Ka
𑒐	খ	খ	ଖ	𑂎	ख	Kha
𑒑	গ	গ	ଗ	𑂏	ग	ga
𑒒	ঘ	ঘ	ଘ	𑂐	घ	gha
𑒓	ঙ	ঙ	ଙ	𑂑	ङ	na

Tirhutā (Maithili)	Bangalā	Assamese	Oriyā	Kaithī	Devākṣara (Devanāgarī)	Roman
𑒔	চ	চ	ଚ	𑂒	च	ca
𑒕	ছ	ছ	ଛ	𑂓	छ	cha
𑒖	জ	জ	ଜ	𑂔	ज	ja
𑒗	ঝ	ঝ	ଝ	𑂕	झ	jha
𑒘	ঞ	ঞ	ଞ	𑂖	ञ	ña
𑒙	ট	ট	ଟ	𑂗	ट	ta
𑒚	ঠ	ঠ	ଠ	𑂘	ठ	tha
𑒛	ড	ডড	ଡ	𑂙	ड	da
𑒜	ঢ	ঢ	ଢ		ढ	dha
𑒝 𑒝	ণ	ণ	ଣ	𑂝	ण	na
𑒞	ত	ত	ତ	𑂞	त	ta
𑒟	থ	থ	ଥ	𑂟	थ	tha
𑒠	দ	দ	ଦ	𑂠	द	da
𑒡	ধ	ধ	ଧ	𑂡	ध	dha
𑒢	ন	ন	ନ	𑂢	न	na
𑒣	প	প	ପ	𑂣	प	pa
𑒤	ফ	ফ	ଫ	𑂤	फ	pha, fa
𑒥	ব	ব	ବ	𑂥	ब	ba
𑒦	ভ	ভ	ଭ	𑂦	भ	bha
𑒧	ম	ম	ମ	𑂧	म	ma
𑒨	য	য়য	ଯ	𑂨	य	ya
𑒩	র	রৰ	ର	𑂩	र	ra
𑒪	ল	ল	ଲ	𑂪	ल	la
𑒫	ব	ব	ଵ	𑂫	व	va
𑒬 𑒬	শ	শ	ଶ	𑂬	श	śa
𑒭	ষ	ষ	ଷ	𑂭	ष	Sa
𑒮	স	স	ସ	𑂮	स	sa
𑒯	হ	হ	ହ	𑂯	ह	ha

of pre-Moslem Mss written at Nalanda and Vikramaśila in Magadha have been found preserved in Nepal. But...in later times the cursive or short-hand form of the old Devanagari style of the Indian alphabet which prevailed in Northern and Western India......from the 7th century, namely, the Kaithi script, came to Magadha by way of the Bhojpuriya tract, and this Kaithi alphabet has held the ground till now. Kaithi because of its simplicity has spread to Mithila as well, where only the Brahmanas and other upper classes keep up the old Maithili character, the latter has never been extensively printed from types; and Devanagari, strengthened by the spread of Hindi and by its special association with Sanskrit at the present day, is now employed in printing Maithili. In Oriya, the old cursive alphabet of the East changed as early as the 15th century into the Oriya alphabet as it is current...now, deviating greatly from the Bengali-Maithili norm."[61]

The broad lines of the origin of the script being thus clear, it remains to indicate the specimens of Tirhutā through the ages, with the help of which its complete history can be written. The earliest documents in this direction are found in the Mss of the Buddhist *Gāns and Dohās* and other Maithila works in Nepal Durbar Library. Rahula Sāṅkrityāyana mentions[62] (without any date) a Ms of *Kurukullā-sāvana* in old Tirhuta among other Maithili Mss in Tibet. The Bihar Research Society has done commendable work in cataloguing Tirhuta Mss of various dates, and though among the published catalogues the dates of the Mss are hardly older than the 15th Century, it has published some important things in this connection in its *Journal*. Among these are the photographs of the Inscription of Śrīdhara Kāyastha, the first Karṇāṭa King Nānyadeva's Minister (c. 1097); the copy of Vardhamāna's contemporary Ms; the copy of Karṇaparva of the

61. Ibid.
62. JBORS Vol. XXIII, p. 31.

Mahābhārata dated La. Sam. 327 (=20th August, 1447 A. D.); and the Kandaha Inscription of King Narasiṁhadeva of Oinivāra Dynasty dated 1357 Sāl (1435 A. D) and the Jayapatra recording legal procedure and judgment in the Maithila Law court of the 18th Century.

Some Peculiarities of Tirhuta

(1) Tirhuta has changed very little during the ages, though of course such a thing as the dot of र going inside the triangle and subsequently forming a line is seen :[63] whereas Oriyā changed quite early and Bengalī developed otherwise from it.

(2) A unique feature of Tirhutā (and Assamese) is the practice of beginning the alphabet with *Ānjī*. In Mithilā a boy on the occasion of his *Akṣarārambha* ceremony in the fifth year of his age is taught to write the sign of *Ānjī* and '*Sidhirastu*', so that 'to have *Ānjī* Siddhirastu' has become an idiom to convey the beginning of something. Though Tirhutā is unfortunately becoming obsolete with the spread of Devanāgarī, even now all high class persons in writing their letters and invitations and religious Mss, or in doing any auspicious work begin with this *Ānjī* sign. Some interpret it to mean the tusk of the deity Gaṇeśa,[64] the deity of learning, and the displler of all evils. But as Pandit Padmanath Bhattacharya shows, "the sign.......does not represent any particular letter or syllable....but is the sign of the *Kuṇḍalinī*—the serpentshaped divinity that

63. Kandaha Inscription (JBORS xx-i) and the rejoinder to it by Dr. Mishra (*Allahabad University Studies* Vol. XII).

64. *Mithila* 29th July 1944. This view is supported by Maithila Vararuci in a slender Ms of *Patrakaumudī* preserved in the Library of the Ganganatha Jha Research Institute, Allahabad.

pervades every letter and regulates its pronunciation. She is in fact the creative energy bringing out every letter...ॐ is the representative of the Vedic Brahma, whereas...*Áñjí* is the symbol of the Tantric divinity 'Kuṇḍalinī'".[65] He quotes from a Tāntric work where the name is found to show that "above the Dvīdala (two petalled *cakra i. e.* the *Áñjícakra*) is the seat of the '*Kalá*' (lit. tact) which is very dear to *Yogin* (devotee). This is called *Áñjí*; this looks like a curved line". In fact this is no other than the "serpentine Kundalini just emerged out of the *Saṭcakras* and" thus the devotee is delighted to see Her in this transcendent stage, on the way to the goal, *Sahasrára-cakra*—within the crown of the head.

(3) The Tirhutā letters are explained by scholars as representing the Tāntric Yantras such as Trikoṇa, Bindu, Vṛtta, Catuṣkoṇa, etc. They are regarded as very sacred and even now Mss in Tirhutā are believed to be more effective in matters of worship and rituals than in any other script.

(4) In Tirhutā, the letter ओ or औ has a separate sign, and does not look as if it is merely an addition to अ.

(5) Short and long mātrās are distinguished in Tirhutā differently from the Devanāgarī.

(6) It can be written very fast. Unlike Devanāgarī but like the Roman script, it can be written without raising the pen after every letter.

(7) It has peculiar forms for most of its Saṁyuktākṣaras (compound letters). This further distinguishes it from all other scripts, *E.g.*, for

ई, क्त, च्च, र्क, ञ्च, ङ्क,
ल्ल, त्म, ट्ट, त्व, प्न, etc.

65. See JKAMARUPA I 3.

(8) It has two separate forms for ब and व each.

(9) The diacritical mark above व or below it, to distinguish it sometimes from ह is its other important distinguishing feature.

(10) Its alphabet is called Kakahara.

(11) It has descriptive names for each form of a letter (Mātṛka or non-Mātṛka). Thus *K* will be described as तरटेका 'क्', कॉहमुन 'का', हरिबेँ 'कि', दीबेँ 'की' वारकुराम 'कु', दूबेँ 'कू', एकबेँ 'के', दूबेँ 'कै', मानविनानेँ 'को', माँकमाड़ी 'कौ', मयानुस्वार 'कं', दुइबुन्दा 'कः'[66]

(12) The full-point is called पाखी (Skt. पारखी).

(13) There are special descriptive epithets to distinguish letters which are pronounced similarly. Thus 'ब' is called पोखरिया 'ब', and 'व', पेटचिरा 'व'.[67]

(14) The Tirhutā letters end in upwards stroke (ūrdhvagati).

66. This has a parallel in Hindi; see Sudhākara Dvivedi, *Gaṇita Kā Itihāsa*, p. 29.

क बिन कर्ण क। कन्_न का। रेखों कि। दीर्घों की। लाड़े कु। बाड़े कू। एक मत के। दोबे कै। कन मत को। दुमांती काना कौ। मत्ते कं। दाती कः।

67. Most of the above features are noted in MODA 167, p. 21.

CHAPTER III

INTRODUCING MAITHILI LITERATURE

I

PERIODS OF MAITHILI LITERATURE

Having seen the forces that have animated the people of Mithila during the ages, and having established that their mother-tongue is an independent language, we may now proceed to examine their vernacular literature from the beginning to the present day. For the sake of convenience in arranging the material for this purpose, it is proposed to divide the entire literature under three heads :

1. *Early Maithili Literature (1300-1600)*—This comprises the beginnings of the language, the proto-Maithili stage, and the early lyric. The literature of the period from 1400 onwards is dominated by Vidyāpati. It sees the extensive vogue of Maithili over the whole of Eastern India as the sole dignified vernacular literary medium after the downfall of the Apabhraṁśa.

2. *Middle Maithili Literature (1600-1860)*—The predominant form of literature during this period is drama, but the centre of activity shifts to Nepal. Amongst the representative writers Vaṁśamaṇi Jha, Jagatprakāśamalla and Umāpati Upādhyāya may be mentioned. The Ankiā-nāṭs of Śankaradeva and others also belong to this very period.

3. *New Maithili Literature (1860—to the present day)*—The period faces at the outset

a steady decadence. A new era, however, dawns in the reign of Maharaja Lakshmishwara Singh (1880-1898). With the opening of the present century only, its genre is discovered, *viz.*, prose. The main obstacle in its growth has been the almost total absence of recognition of the language in the educational system of the province. Of course, with the growth of 'English' education; other branches of literature also receive greater attention. Drama, poetry and prose all make great progress.

II

TYPES OF LITERATURE IN MAITHILI

Forms of Poetry

Almost all forms of traditional Indian Poetry are represented in Maithili. Like Sanskrit, however, there are works like *Ankavilása*, *Chandolankára manjúsá* and *Alankrtibodha* (works on Poetics), *Bútiprakása* (on medicine), and so on, which should have been written ordinarily in prose and not in verse.

Coming to the poetical literature proper, we find a few Mahakāvyas first, some of which can vie with the Mahākāvyas of any other language. There are three classes of Maithili Mahākāvyas. First, there are those which are direct translations and adaptations of Sanskrit Mahākāvyas, such as, Acyutānanda Datt's *Mahábhárata* and *Raghuvamsa*. Secondly, there are such independent Mahākāvyas as strictly follow the conventions of Sanskrit Mahākāvyas. This class includes works like Badarīnātha Jha's *Ekávalí-Parinaya*, Raghunandanadāsa's *Subhadrá-Harana* and Tantranātha Jha's *Kicaka-badha*. The adaptations of Mahākāvyas like Michael Madhusudanadatta's *Meghanáda Badha* by Gaurishankara Jha, may be included in

this very class. The third group is led by Manabodha's *Krsnajanma* and Canda Jha's *Rámáyana*. Both these works do not intend to follow strictly the rules of a Mahākāvya, but have all the leading characteristics of it. They are composed in well marked out cantos or chapters ; they open with a benediction ; they plunge into their stories by declaring their subject matter first ; they are based on historical or mythological accounts of famous heroes ; and lastly, they embrace an elaborate and descriptive narrative.

The Khaṇdakāvya is comparatively more common in Maithili. The main distinction between the Khaṇḍakāvya and the Mahakāvya is the greater elaboration of descriptions and the larger number of episodes and of cantos in the latter. There are at least six kinds of it in Maithili. The first class consists of the various translations and adaptations of such Khaṇḍakāvyas as *Meghadúta*, *Rtusamhára*, *Bhartrhari-nirveda-Kávya* and *Virahini-Vrajánganá*. The second category of Khaṇdakāvyas is made up of such works as Lāladāsa's *Gangálahari* and *Ganesakhanda*, Guṇavantalāladāsa's *Gajagráhoddhára* and other longer poems, Raghunandanadāsa's *Vira-Bálaka*, Riddhinātha Jha's *Sativibhúti*, Anupa Mishra's *Náradavivàha*, etc. These are all long narratives of mytholgoical or legendary heroes.

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The third group is devoted to what is called *Vátáhvána-Kávya*. In Mithila it is a peculiar type of Sanskrit Kāvya, supposed to induce the wind to blow at particularly hot hours. Candā Jha and Bhānā Jha have followed it in Maithili. The fourth class consists of Virudāvalis such as those by Lāladāsa and Riddhinatha Jha, and the fifth includes miscellaneous occasional long poems, such as Kāshikānta Mishras's *Kobara Gíta*. The last three classes of long poems are inferior to the first two classes in their subject matter.

The 'Sammara' (=Skt. Svayaṁvara) is an important class of Khaṇḍa-Kavya delineating the course of events leading to the marriage of such persons as Rāma, Jagannātha, Kṛṣṇa, etc. Many minor poets round about the 19th century are known to have written in this type.

Maithili Folk literature has particularly attractive kinds of long romantic tales in verse which may be called Gita-kathās (Popular Ballads). *Bihulá-Gita*, *Diná Bhadrika Gíta*, and *Sutthi-Kumari-ka Gita* are good illustrations of the finer achievements in this type.

The most prolific branch of poetry, however, has been the Gīti-Kāvya which can be rendered into English as 'lyric poetry'. These lyrics are meant literally to be sung. This is the reason why its various types in Maithili cannot be distinguished unless they are sung out. Several kinds of them have been invented and perfected in Maithili and to this day a Maithili poet is not considered worth his name if he cannot compose some of the several forms of traditional Maithili lyrics. The earliest specimens of lyric are found in Caryāgītis but it is in the numerous vernacular adaptations and imitations of Jayadeva's immortal work *Gíta-govinda* that it first rose to glory. Vidyāpati was the first great poet to exploit almost all the types of lyric in Maithili.

The distinguishing characteristics of the Maithili lyric are these: It is extraordinarily musical; its directness and spontaneity are unimpeachable; its length is invariably suited to the expression of *one* powerful mood or emotion; its range is wide and unlimited; its chief sources of inspiration are the events and experiences of everyday life; and, lastly, Sanskrit stories and legends, and Sanskrit poetic and erotic conventions provide eternal background to its colour and imagery. One of

the most common features in Maithili lyrics is the *Bhanitá*, which has been thus described :

> "The insertion of the poet's name (or any name he chooses, whether a *nom de plume* of himself or the name of *guru*) appears to have been practised in the old and medieval periods throughout the length and breadth of upper India. It seems to have been a development of the practice of the earlier Sanskrit poets to insert in the poem or stanza the name of the metre in which it is written, as *double entendre*." (Dr. Sukumar Sen in *History of Brajabuli Literature*).

Some of these *Bhanitás* contain the name of the king, the patron or any other person (often along with his consort) whom the poet wishes to oblige or compliment as his friend or benefactor.

One of the greatest difficulties in presenting a classification of the chief lyrical forms is the tendency of mixing up folk forms with literary forms of Maithili poetry. Often it becomes impossible to say if a particular form is not at the same time responsible for folk poems. The following list limits itself (as far as practicable) to those kinds of lyric poetry which have been handled by poets of eminence and have produced great literary poetry. Full details about folk lyrical forms will be found elsewhere. The lyrical types are mainly distinguished by their melodies. There are also some forms which have alternatives called "छन्द पर'क" (*i.e.* metrical verses fit to be recited rather than to be sung). Of course, the lyrics have differences in their subject matter too.

The most common and important type is the 'Tirahuti' (or Tirahuta), which seems to have been so called because it was the most popular and successful indigenous lyrical expression of the country. The Tirahuti is the richest of all classes of Maithili songs. It comprises mainly love songs—songs of separation as well as of union. There are beautiful descriptions

of the *náyiká*, her dalliance, her union with the lover, and, her separation from the lover; in general, every aspect of her heart is unfolded. The words ना, हो, रे, or सजनी गे are often found as its refrain.

The refrain सजनी गे is generally found in the most important subdivision of Tirahuti which is called 'Baṭagamanī'. These Baṭagamanīs are primarily meant to portray the *náyiká* while she goes to meet her lover (in *abhisára*). Baṭagamanīs can be best distinguished from ordinary Tirahuti only when they are sung out in their peculiar melody (सुर). Vidyāpati is the most successfnl writer of this class of Maithili lyrics.

The 'Goālarī' is another important branch of Tirahuti. Its theme is generally the sports and youthful pranks of Kṛṣṇa in the company of Gopīs. Nandīpati is one of the greatest writers of this class of songs.

The 'Rāsa' is an extension of Kṛṣṇa's sportive līlās with Gopis. It deals specially with Kṛṣṇa's Rāsa-līlā. Its writers have been influenced by Brajabhāṣā poetry. Saheba-Rāma is the most successful writer of the Rāsa.

The 'Māna' is a class of poems forming a sort of dramatic lyric representing the annoyance of the beloved (स्त्रीमान) and the request of the lover to mend matters, and vice versa (पुरुषमान). Umapati is the greatest exponent of this type.

The 'Samadāuni' (=Skt. सम्वादवाणी) represents the farewell song, especially sung to bid adieu to the daughter when she is going to her husband's house. There are fine specimens of this class as applied to the bidding farewell to the image of Śri Durgā in Navarātra on the day of its immersion, and, even, to the passing harvest of mangoes. The elegiac note in this class of songs is very much enjoyed by Maithili

readers. Gaṇanātha Jha and Vindhyanātha Jha have made important contributions in this direction.

The 'Lagani' is of two kinds: the one embodies four to five stanzas of great beauty with रे की as the rhyming refrain. The other is a folk-type of greater length; it generally gives tales in verse to be sung by village women, when they are grinding grains in the early morning. It is the former which has been used by 'Nidhi' and Gaṇanātha Jha as medium of fine poetry.

The 'Caita' or 'Caitābara' is meant to convey emotions of love in the month of Caitra (March-April). The rhyming refrain is हो राम, हे रामा or रामा. Most songs in this class belong to folk-poetry.

The 'Malara' is another seasonal class of songs. It is of two kinds: the 'Pāvasa Malāra' (which is fit to be sung in rainy season) and the 'Dhuriā Malāra' (which may be sung in dry season). The rāga of Malāra is distinct from all and is the commonest one.

The 'Joga' and 'Uciti' are peculiar classes of Maithili songs. The Joga is sung to the bridegroom or the lover to bind him to the bride or to the beloved by incantations. The earliest songs of this class go back to the days of Vidyāpati. The Uciti songs are supposed to convey words of courtsey by the host to any distinguished guest. These two classes have both literary and folk types.

Such forms as 'Sohara' (birth songs, esp. of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma), 'Barahamāsā' (songs describing the state of separation of lovers during the course of twelve months)--or 'Chaomāsā' (only during six months, Jyeṣṭha to Kārttika) or 'Caumāsā' (only during the *Cāturmāsya*, the rainy season)—etc. are other familiar kinds of

vernacular poetry. These forms also have both literary and folk types.

Of the devotional songs we have had an occasion above to refer to (1) 'Nacārī', (2) 'Maheśavānī', (3) 'Gosauni-ka Gīta' and (4) 'Viṣṇupada'. The 'Nacāris' are distinguished by the direct prayer to Lord Śiva. The name Nacārī seems to have been derived from the ecstatic dance of Śiva and is probably intended to liken the cognate state of the devotee into which he loses himself while praying to the Lord. The name 'Nacarī' is now often confused with 'Maheśavānī' in common parlance, but there is really a marked distinction between the two. The Nacārī is directly devotional; the Maheśavānī is merely a song about Śiva. The 'Maheśavānī' has paradoxically not the '*Vánī*' (speech) of Maheśa (Śiva) but the '*Vánī*' (speech or song) in honour of Maheśa'. Maheśavānī is frequently addressed to Menakā (called in Maithili *Mandāinī*) the mother of Gaurī and represents songs of the marriage of Śiva or those of his family life. There are fine examples of both kinds of Śiva songs from the days of Vidyāpati. The chief Nacārī poets have been Vidyāpati, Lāla Kavi, Kānhārāmadāsa and Candā Jha.

The 'Gosāunīka-gīta' (or *Devīpada* or *Bhagavatī-ka Gīta*) is the devotional song or hymn in praise of the several forms of Śakti. Notable contribution to this type has been made by Vidyāpati, the Mallas of Nepal, Ratnapāṇi and Gaṇanātha Jha, though almost every poet has been known to have written in this form.

With the introduction of English education certain English lyrical forms also came to Maithili. Chief of them are the ordinary lyric, the sonnet, the ode, and the literary ballad.

There is, then, what is known as Muktaka Kavya. It means a kind of verse or stanza

which has no connection with other verses or stanzas. It includes the Samasyāpurtti, riddles (prahelikā or *Ahiári* or *Kúta*) and Apahnutis (or *Mukarís*). The last is a wonderful class of poetic trifles. In it the real character of a subject in question is denied and that of a beloved or her lover ascribed. Sitārāma Jha, Upendranātha Thākura 'Mohana' and Jivanātha Jha are the popular writers of the Muktaka type of poetry.

Forms of Prose

Almost all forms of prose are found in Maithili. The earliest type of prose that we get is the 'Varṇanā'. It generally consists of a set description. The best example of it is the *Varnaratnákara* of Jyotirīśvara. The origins of the 'Varṇanā' may be traced back to the Prākṛta literature of Jainas. Parallels to it are found in Gujarati and Bengali literatures. The Varṇanā appears to have been very popular in Maithili as it is used in some Kirtaniya dramas, and perhaps in the Nepalese dramas too it played an important part.

The Middle period shows two more types of prose—the dramatic prose and the documentary prose. The prose of the dramas is emotional and narrative in style. Modern dramatic prose is, however, very different. It is brisk and has all the qualities of everyday prose. The documentary prose belongs exclusively to the Middle period and is not aesthetically of a very high order.

Modern Prose has several new varieties :

1. *Prose of Entertainment*—

(*a*) Journalistic prose.

(*b*) Essay.

(*c*) Fiction and Travel.

2. *Prose of Information*—
   (a) Criticism and Scholarship.
   (b) Philosophy and Religion.
   (c) History and Biography.
   (d) Miscellaneous.

All these forms have been discussed in detail in their proper places.

3. Campu: *e.g.*, Riddhinatha Jha's *Visvesvara-Campú.*

Forms of the Drama

There are three main classes of Maithili drama:

1. '*Regular*' *Maithili Drama*: The regular Maithili dramas resemble dramas in Sanskrit in that the speeches are in Sanskrit and Prakṛta, and verses intersperse the play, but there are in addition, songs in Maithili. In some cases Maithili songs only translate the meaning of the preceding or succeeding Sanskrit verses, *e.g*, in Umāpati's *Párijátaharana.*

2. '*Irregular*' *Maithili Drama*: The second kind of drama is that which has Maithili songs and verses alone in the body of the play. Sanskrit and Prākṛta are introduced very sparingly. For example, Ratnapāṇi's *Usáharana* and Jagajjyotirmalla's *Mahábhárata.* There is another kind of irregular Maithili drama which flourished in Assam. It is much different from the 'regular' Maithili drama. It uses prose profusely and does not follow the division of Rupakas according to the Sanskrit dramaturgy.

3. *Modern Maithili Drama*: It follows the Sanskrit and the English models but dispenses with all non-vernacular speeches and with the predominence of lyrics. Of course, gradually even verse is done away with,

Another classification of Maithili drama can be made as follows:

1. *Nepalese Maithili Drama*: It began with the gradual introduction of Maithili songs in Sanskrit dramas. In its finished form it was a sort of opera, with profuse Maithili songs, no Sanskrit or Prākṛta and a structure very much different from Sanskrit drama.

2. *Kirtaniyá Maithili Drama*: It also began with the gradual introduction of Maithili songs in Sanskrit dramas and ended in a complete lyrical drama predominently in Maithili and it had the motive of singing the praise of the Lord.

3. *Ankiá Náta*: It was a peculiar religious type of drama in Assam. It has been described at the appropriate place in detail.

4. *Modern Maithili Drama*: Same as in the above classification.

III

VERSIFICATION IN MAITHILI

The late Sir Ganganātha Jha says:

"पन्द्रहम वर्ष में पद्यरचनाक रुचि (विश्वनाथबाबूके) मेलैन्ह ओ अनेक रचना कैलैन्ह। परन्तु ई सुनि पिता कहलथिन्ह जे 'गीतकवित्त बनैतह्नी भने परन्तु सुनल थिक जे भाषाकाव्य अगण मेने अशुभ-होइत छैक तैं छन्दःशास्त्र पढि लिअ तखन बनाएब—तावत जनु बनाबी" ।"[1]

Thus it seems that a thorough knowledge of prosody was necessarily acquired by Maithili poets. The works on prosody have been very popular in Mithila from very early days. Various commentaries of *Prákrtapingala* are

1. *Gaṇanâtha--Vindhyanâtha—Padâvalî*, edited by Sir Ganganatha Jha, 'Samarpaṇa,' p. 1.

known to have been written, such as, those by Maithila Kālidasa of Uccaiṭha (before c. 1644), by Ramāpati (1704), by Durgādatta, by Dāmodara Miśra, by Bhīṣma Miśra, by Jānakīnandana and by Rāghava Jha of Tarauni. Says Dr. K. P. Jayaswal:

> "Prākṛta Prosody was a favourite study in Mithila from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. This is evidenced by several manuscripts of the Prakṛtapiṅgala by Naga and commentaries thereon ...... It has exercised the greatest influence on poetry in......Maithili and other northern vernaculars. It deals with Dohā, Toṭaka, Chhappaya, Kuṇḍaliyā, Mālinī and other...metres... There is a vast variety of vernacular metres which are now not in use... The Mithila Pandits used the vernacular metres Kuṇḍaliyā etc. to make verses in Sanskrit e.g ,... the Ekāvalī (of Gokulanātha Upādhyāya)... The Śrutabodha, Chhandomañjarī and Vṛttaratnākara (were other popular works of Prosody)...... From the seventeenth century vernacular Prosody attracts more attention, although writers like Vidyāpati and Umāpati(?) had largely composed in vernacular two centuries earlier."[2]

The prosody of Early and Middle Maithili poetry is based on the Prakṛta and Apabhraṁśa metres, where the Mātrā or the metrical moment is the more important factor, as opposed to the Sanskrit metres, where the Varṇa or the letter plays an important part.[3] The

2. MMC II, Introduction. Similarly we find Alaṅkāra and Kāvya Śāstra works "of Maithila authors from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries to the sixteenth becoming standard works in Mithila to the exclusion of the text books from other parts of India. There is thus a special Maithila school of poetics." (Ibid). There is "a clear influence of the vernacular composition" (Ibid) on it from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. This also shows the background of Maithili poetic craftsmanship.

3. See the distinction between the two in H. D. Velankar's article on "Apabhraṁśa Metres" in the *Journal of the University of Bombay*, Vol. II, Pt. iii, p. 32.

song metres are the most important metres used, where poets are obliged to follow the Rāgas and Rāgiṇīs also, each set to Tālas and Svaras. It is not clear if (at all) they are entitled to be included in what Dr. H. D. Velankar has called "the Matra-Vṛttas and Tāla Vṛttas."[4] Locana, is the only Maithili writer who discusses these song metres (in his *Rágataraṅginí*) and he says: "Songs are regulated by the rules of 'tāla', 'māna', 'rasa', 'chanda', 'gamaka', 'nada' and 'pada'. Such songs are called 'nibaddha' as distinguished from 'anibaddha'."[5] These 'nibaddha' songs may be in 'marga' (Classical) or 'deśı' (Popular or Local) styles of melodies (Ragas and Ragiṇıs). Locana thinks that the vernacular songs of Mithila composed by Vidyapatı etc., are in the 'Popular' or 'Local' styles of melodies as prevalent in Mithila. Metre, thus, forms only an important basis of distinguishing the 'deśı' songs.[6]

Locana first enunciates the rules of counting the 'short' and the 'long' matrās. They are like those in Prākṛta and Apabhraṁśa prosody in general. A 'short' letter generally represents one matra, while a 'long' letter represents two as in Sanskrit—but some leters, such as, 'ए' and 'ओ', are made to represent only one matra. It is in this way that the major distinction between Sanskrit prosody (mainly consisting of Akṣara-vṛttas) and vernacular prosody (mainly consisting of Mātravṛttas) is brought about. The Matra-vṛttas afford greater freedom, and are more suitable for singing. For:

> "In singing, keeping of time (*tâla*) is very important and keeping of time is possible only with Mātrās

4. See *Bhârata-Kaumudî* (Radhakumud Commemoration Volume), pp. 1065 ff.

5. RT, p. 36-37.

6. RT, p. 32.

and not with the letters, since a letter does not represent a uniform unit."[7]

The gaṇas in Locana are, therefore, 'Dvikala', 'Catuṣkala' or 'Ṣaṭkala' merely. Of course, he recognises the eight Sanskrit gaṇas too, but rarely uses them.

The "long" Mātras are—(1) the 'dīrgha' vowels आ, ई, ऊ, ऐ and औ singly or jointly; (2) the letter with anusvara; (3) the letter with visarga; and (4) the letter preceding a conjunct letter. The 'short' Mātras are—(1) ए and ओ singly or joined with some letter; (2) the letter preceding a conjunct containing र or ह as its first syllable; and (3) optionally, the letter at the end of a metrical line.

A special feature of these song metres described by Locana is the 'dhruva' which is supposed to sum up or to introduce the subject-matter of the song. It may sometimes be more than one in a song. Generally, it occurs in the beginning, and is sung after a Pada. There is no clear indication about the number of Padas; they appear to be four, six or eight.

Below is given a list of ninety-six song metres as enumerated by Locana. The name of the dominant Rāgas or Rāgiṇīs is first given because they are the most important feature in determining them; then follow in order, the particular sub-division of the Rāga or Rāgiṇī which is also generally the name of the metre, the number of Mātrās in a half of a Pada (when the Matrās are to be divided into Gaṇas, it is shown by means of the plus signs, and when the first half of a Pada differs from the second half, the two halves are shown by separate brackets), the number of Mātrās in the Dhruva (when the Mātrās are to be divided into Gaṇas,

7. Dr. H. D. Velankar, "Apabhraṁśa Metres," *Journal of the Bombay University*, II. iii. (Nov. 1933), p. 33.

it is shown by means of the plus signs, and when the first half and the second half are both to be distinguished, they are shown by separate brackets, and when there is no Dhruva mentioned, it is indicated by a simple 'no' or when doubtful by '?no'), the specialities, if any, of the metre, the tālas (S=Satvara, M=Madhyama), (in one or two cases) the scansion of the lines, and lastly, the page of RT where the metre is described.

ASANKIRṆA RÂGAS

(1) *Bhairavî*

(1) Bhairavi Metre; ?; ?; Cautāla—2S and 2M; Illustration in Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda*: रजनिजनितगुरुजागरराग-कषायितमलसनिवेशम् ॥ etc. (p. 38.)

(2) *Barâḍî*

(2) Rāghavīya-barāḍī Metre; (27)+(30); (9)+(14); the pause frequently is long and the mātrās (in the Pada) may be less or more by 1, 2 or 3. Illustration in Vidyāpati's सॉंझक बेरॉं जमुनाक तीरॉं कदंबेरि बनतरु तरॉं etc. (—UUU—UU—U ——U—UUUUUUU—)=26,+(UUU—U—UUUU——U—U UUUUUUUUU—)=31. This is the scansion of the Pada (UUUUU——)=9,+(UUUUUU—UUUU—)=14, This is the scansion of the Dhruva. (p. 40.)

(3) Parvatīya-barāḍī or Pahaḍia-barāḍī Metre; 13, 14 or 16; (4+——)+(12+——); ?. (p. 42.)

(4) Deśīya-barāḍī Metre; 17 (Sometimes like Pahaḍia); (12)+(17); tritāla. (p. 44.)

(5) Mādhavīya-barāḍī Metre; 20, 21, 22 or 23; No, generally; pause at 12th letter (sometimes, at 10th, 11th or 13th letter); tritāla—S. (p. 45.)

(6) Bhaṭiāla(-lī)-barāḍī Metre; 25, 26 or 27 ends in 'Guru' in singing irrespective of the text; (Ragaṇa+pause +Yagaṇa + Laghu + Guru + Nagaṇa+Nagaṇa+Sagaṇa+ Laghu)+(repeat); tritāla—S and M. (p. 47.)

(7) Nepāla(-īya)-barāḍī Metre; 27; (20)+(25). (p. 48.)

(3) *Kauśika*

(8) Kauśika Metre; 4+4+4+3 or 2; No; tritāla—S+ M. (p. 49.)

(4) *Deśākha*

(9) Jayadeva-deśākha Metre; ?; ?; Illustration in Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda*: स्तनविनिहितमपिहारमुदारम् सामनुते कृशतनुरतिभारं ॥ etc. (p. 49.)

(10) Deśa-deśākha Metre; 4+4+4+4+minus 1 or plus 1; No; pause at every 7th letter; tala as before. (p. 50.)

(5) *Rāmakarī*

(11) Jayadevī Metre; ?; ?; as in Jayadeva's वदसि यदि किञ्चिदपीत्यादि । (p. 51.)

(12) Śuddha-rāmakarī Metre; 25, 26, 27 or 28; No. (p.51.)

(13) Deśa-rāmakarī Metre; 21, 22, 23, 24 or 25; No. (p. 52).

(14) Supriyā (or Prītikarī) Metre; 23, 24, 25, 26 or 27; (6+6+2)+(repeat)—may have one, two or more Dhruvas; tritāla—S. (p. 53.)

(6) *Lalitā*

(15) Lalita Metre; 4+4+4+4+4+4+4+3 or 2 or 1; (32+32); tritāla—S. Kellogg and Conrady also describe this metre. (p. 54)

(7) *Kedāra*

(16) Śuddha-Kedāra Metre; 25, 26, 27 or 28; (31+(31); tritāla—M and S. (p. 55.)

(17) Kedārakedāra Metre; 6+6+2; ?; tritāla—S and M. (p. 56.)

(18) Vihāgara-Kedāra Metre; 6+6+6+6+sometimes plus or minus 2 or 3; (4+4+4+4)+(4+4+4+4+4+4+4); Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 56.)

(19) Malārīya-Kedāra Metre; 25 to 30; (15)+?; S ? (p. 57.)

(20) Parvatīya (or Pahaḍiyā)-Kedāra Metre; 18; ? No; pause after 5th and 6th letters in first half of a Pada and after 4th and 5th letters in second half; tritāla. (p. 58.)

(21) Kāmoda-Kedāra Metre; (14 to 17)+(repeat); ? No. (p. 58.)

(22) Kedāra-Mālava Metre; (6+6+6+6)+(25 or 26)—the two halves each end in Guru; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 60.)

(8) *Kâmoda*

(23) Kāmoda-Maṅgala Metre; 27+sometimes 2 or 3 more; (7+7)+(repeat); last but one letter of a half of a Pada usually long; tritāla—3 S. (p. 61.)

(24) Deva-Kāmoda Metre; 12 to 18; ? No; not strict in rules. (p. 61.)

(9) *Śrîrâga*

(25) Śrī-rāga Metre; 25 to 27; No; at the end or the last but one letter in a half of a Pada, Guru; tritāla—S and M. (p. 62.)

(10) *Vasanta*

(26) Vasanta Metre; 25 to 30; ? No; its sub-divisions are to be found in Jayadeva. (p. 63.)

(11) *Mâlava*

(27) Vitata-Mālava Metre; (1st and 3rd Caraṇa each, 4+4+4+4) and (2nd and 4th Caraṇa each, 4+4+4+ minus 1); (1st and 3rd Caraṇa each, 4+4+4+minus 1) and (2nd and 4th Caraṇa each, 4+4+4+4); tritāla— S. (p. 64.)

(28) Deśa-Mālava Metre; 4+4+4+4+1 or 2 or 3; ? No, tritāla—S. (p. 65.)

(29) Śrī-Mālava Metre; 4+4+4+4+sometimes minus 1; ? No, Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 66).

(30) Dhanāśrī (or Dhanachī) Mālava Metre; 25 to 30; (4±4+4+4)+? ; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 66.)

(31) Viyogi-Mālava Metre; (6+6+2)+(6+6+sometimes 1 more), ? No; dvitāla—S and m. (p. 67.)

(32) Bṛhat-Viyogi-Mālava Metre; 20 to 28; ? No; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 68.)

(33) Parvatīya (or Pahaḍiā)-Mālava Metre; 22 to 27; 5; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 68.)

(34) Vijayapura-Mālava Metre; rising Pada 6+6+6+6 and falling Pada 4+4+4+4+sometimes minus 1; ? No; tāla as before. (p. 69.)

(35) Jogiā-Mālava Metre; 14 to 17; 4+4+4+4+sometimes 2 more or 3 less ? ; tritāla—S. (p. 70.)

(36) Sāraṅgī-Mālava Metre; 14 to 19; ? No; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 71.)

(37) Karuṇā-Mālava Metre (Priyatamā-Mālava Rāga); 25 to 28; ? No; ? (p. 72.)

(12) *Asāvarī*

(38) Vitatā-asāvarī Metre; (4+4+4)+(4+4+4+4)—sometimes one mātrā in the half-Pada is less; ? No, (p. 73.)

(39) Deśī-asāvarī Metre; 21 to 24; ? No; tālas: S and M. (p. 73.)

(40) Siṅgha(-lī)-asāvarī Metre; 21 to 26; ? No; tāla as before. (p. 74.)

(41) Jogiā-asāvarī Metre · 23 to 27; (10)+(12); tritāla—M. (p. 75.)

(42) Sindhulā-asāvarī Metre; 25 to 30; (15)+(as in half-Pada); Cautāla—2 S and 2 M (p. 75.)

(43) Bhogini-asāvarī Metre; 4+4+4+4+11; ? No; Not strict in rules; tritāla—Laghi and M. (p. 76.)

(44) Sambhogini-asāvarī Metre; 4+4+4+4+sometimes less by one or two Mātrās and by one Gaṇa of four Mātrās ?; ?; tritāla—M. (p. 77.)

(45) Daṇḍaka-asāvarī Metre; 49 or 50, ? No; dvitāla—S. (p. 77.)

(46) Sarasa-asāvarī Metre; 4+4+4+4+1 or 2 or 3; ? No; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 78.)

(47) Drāviḍī (-ṇī)—asāvarī Metre; 14 to 17; ? No; tritāla—M. (p. 79.)

(48) Abhirāmā-asāvarī Metre; 4+4+1 or 2 or 3; 2; dvitāla—S. (p. 80.)

(49) Manoharā-asāvarī Metre; 24 to 28; ? (p. 89.)

(13) *Malārī*

(50) Śuddha-Malārī Metre; 4+4+4+4—sometimes 1 to 3 more; ?; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 80.)

(51) Parvatīya (or Pahaḍiā)—Malārī Metre; 26 ?; S. (p. 81.)

(14) *Bhūpālī*

(52) Bhūpālī Metre; Same as Sarasa-asāvarī Metre; ?; dvitāla. (p. 82.)

(15) *Gurjarī*

(53) Gurjarī Metre; like Jayadeva's मामियं चलिता विलोक्य वृतं वधू निचयेन etc. (p. 82.)

SANKIRṆA RĀGAS

(16) *Vibhāsī*

(54) Vibhāsī Metre; 21 to 27; 5; generally short Mātrās and Svaras Tvarita—the beginning and the end of the songs with Vilambita Svaras; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 83.)

(17) *Ahirānī or Bhīmapalāśī*

(55) Ahirānī or Bhīmapalāśī Metre; 26 to 29; (13)+(13); Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p 84.)

(56) Ramyā-Bhīmapalāśī Metre; Same as Ahirānī above; (16+(16); tāla as before. (p. 85.)

(57) Dhanyā-Bhīmapalāśī Metre; Same as Ahirānī above; 4+4+4; tritāla—S. (p. 85.)

(58) Vitatā-Bhīmapalāśī Metre; 25 to 28; (19(+(19); ? (p 86.)

(18) *Gopīvallabha*

(59) Gopīvallabha Metre; 21 to 25; (If at all) 15; same as that in Karuṇāmālava Metre, but can be distinguished, see RT p 88.)

(19) *Śāraṅgī*

(60) Śuddhā-Śāraṅgī Metre; 47 to 51; ? No; Cautāla —2 S and 2 M. (p. 88.)

(61) Deśī-Śāraṅgī Metre; 21 to 28; 12; Cautāla—S and M. (p 89.)

(62) Abhirāmā-Śāraṅgī Metre; 4+4+4+4 to 6+6+6+4, ? No, Virāma-Caraṇā ? (p. 90.)

(63) Śobhanā-Śāraṅgī Metre; 6+6+1 or 2; ?; ?. (p. 90.)

(64) Anūpā-Śāraṅgī Metre; (9 to 13)+(12 or 13)+(12 or 13) ?; ?; with only two parts in beginning a Pada, then all the three; irregular, (p. 91.)

(20) *Sūhaba or Sūhao*

(65) Deśa-Sūhaba Metre; 21 to 27; (15)+(?); tritāla—M. (p. 92.)

(66) Śuddha-Sūhaba Metre; 27; (19)+(16). (p. 93.)

(67) Kāma-Sūhabā Metre; 25 to 30; 4+4+4+4. (p. 93.)

(68) Karuṇa-Suhaba Metre; 4+4+4+4+sometimes minus 1 or 2; dvitāla—S and M. (p. 94.)

(69) Sundara-Suhaba Metre; (5 or 6)+(8 or 12)+(6) ?, (p. 95.)

(21) Koḍāra

(70) Smarasandīpana-Koḍāra Metre; 20 to 27; (12)+(12); ? (p. 96.)

(71) Viyogī-Koḍāra Metre; 25 to 29; 18—the beginning will be an elegiac word. (p. 96.)

(72) Moraṅgiā-Koḍāra Metre; order of Mātrās—long, short, long: the first half-Pada of "long" Mātrās 25 to 27 +the second half of "short" Mātrās 3 or 4 more than those in the first half; ? (p. 98.)

(73) Daṇḍaka-Koḍāra Metre; same as Daṇḍaka-asāvarī; ?; Jayadeva's श्रीमुरारिपदारविन्द etc., illustration; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 99.)

(74) Śuddha-Koḍāra Metre; 24 to 28; ? (p. 99)

(75) Vitata-Koḍāra Metre; 21 to 27; ? (p. 100)

(22) Dhanāśrī (or Dhanachī)

(76) Maṅgalī-Dhanachī Metre; 24 to 31; ?; tritāla—S. (p. 101.)

(77) Parvatīya (or Pahaḍiā)-Dhanachī Metre; 4+4+4+4+minus 1; ?; No; tāla as before. (p. 102.)

(78) Pañca(ma)-surā (or susvara)-Dhanachī Metre; 4+4+4+1 to 16; ? No; Cautāla—2 S+2 M. (p. 102.)

(79) Śrī-Vimiśra-Dhanachī Metre; (11 or 12)+(15 or 16); ? No; tritāla—Laghu+S. (p. 103.)

(80) Jogiā-Dhanachī Metre; 22 to 25; (13)+(as in half-Pada); ? (p. 104.)

(81) Śāmbhavī-Dhanachī Metre; 14 to 16; ?; tritāla—S; irregular in following rules. (p. 105.)

(82) Śobhanā-Dhanachī Metre; 16 to 17; ?. (p. 106.)

(23) Gauḍamālava

(83) Gauḍī-gauḍamālava Metre; 10 to 16; ?; dvitāla. (p. 106.)

(84) Maithila-gauḍamālava Metre; 12 to 17; ?. (p. 107.)

(24) *Rājavijaya*

(85) Devarāja Metre; 25 to 28; (29)+(?); Cautāla—2 M and 2 S. (p. 107.)

(86) Alānarāja (or, Alānavimiśra- or Soḍana- Rājavijaya) Metre; 13 to ?18; ?; tritāla—Laghu, S, M. (p. 108.)

(87) Deśarāja Metre, 12 to 14; ?; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 109.)

(88) Kānararāja Metre; 4+4+4+4+or−? to 19; ?. (p. 109.)

(89) Maṅgalarāja Metre; 4+4+4+1 to 4+4+4+4; ?; tritāla. (p. 110.)

(90) Manamodarāja Metre; ‘5 to 30; ?; tritāla—S, M. (p. 111.)

(91) Bhaṭlala(i)rāja Metre; 25 to 28; ?; tritāla -S, M. (p. 112.)

(25) *Nāṭa*

(92) Śuddhanāṭa Metre; 6+6 or 6+6+minus 2; ?; dvitāla. (p. 113.)

(93) Malārināṭa Metre; 25 to 30; (4+4+4+4)+(as in half-Pada); ? (p. 114.)

(94) Śaṅkukanāṭa Metre; 12 to 16; ? (p. 115)

(95) Kāmodanāṭa Metre; 4+4+4+?1 to 16+?.. ; ?; Cautāla—2 S and 2 M. (p. 117).

(96) Uttamanāṭa Metre; (1st half "short" Mātrā Pada 10 to 13)+(2nd half "long" Mātrā Pada 25 to 26); ?; irregular in following rules. (p. 118.)

The joining of ‘metre’ with ‘melodies’ (Rāgas and Rāgiṇīs) is also found in Nānyadeva’s *Sarasvatīhṛdayālankārahāra*. This is also seen in the *Caryāpadas* and in Jayadeva’s *Gītagovinda*. Regarding the *Caryās* Dr. S. K. Chatterji, however, says:

> "The metre of the Caryā poems are Mātrā-vṛtta, being mostly ‘Padākulaka’, or ‘Caupāi’ which originated in the late MIA period. A specifically Bengali or East Māgadhan metre like the ‘Payār’ of 14 syllables is not found."[8] (*This is one of the most important reasons why they are Maithili and not Bengali specimens*).

8. ODBL, p. 117.

But Jayadeva's metres are like Locana's song metres regulated by definite Rāgas and definite Tālas. Vidyāpati[9] and his numerous Maithili imitators use the metres enumerated by Locana. Maithili poems and dramas in Assam[10] and Nepal,[11]

9. E.g., *Rāmabhadrapura Ms* has : मालव, सुहव, गुर्जरी, बसन्त, अहिर (अहिरानी ?), श्रीराग, धनछी, बराली (ड़ी), कोलाव (कोड़ार ?), सामरी (?), कानल(र), लरि(लि)त, बिभास, आभोग्य (?), मनारी (मलारी ?), मलार, नरित (ललित ?), सारंगी । *Nepal Ms* has : मालव, धनछी, असावरी, मलारी, साभरी (सामरी ? असावरी ?), मालवी, अहिरानी, केदारा, कोलार (कोड़ार ?), शारंगी, गुज्जरी (?), बरली (बराड़ी ?), ललित, ललिता, नाट, बिभास and बसन्त Dr. Subhadra Jha (*The Seeker*, April 19.2 p. 29) could not identify some of these (बरली, गुज्जरी and शारङ्गी) perhaps because of their wrong spelling. *Ramanatha Jha's Ms* has भूपाली, कानरा, कोलार, मालव, सुहव and रामकरी. Locana quotes extensively in RT Vidyāpati and his followers.

10 See JKAMARUPA X 3-4 p. 1 ff. In *Ankia Nâts* e.g., there are आसोवारि (असावरी), अहिर (अहिरानी ?), बेलोवार (बेलावली ?), मूर्तिमंगलभटिया or भटिया or भटिआली, धनश्री, कल्यान, कामोद, कानड़ा कौ (?), महुर (?), सिन्धुर, श्रीगान्धार, गौरी or श्रीगौरी, सुहाइ (सुहव ?), श्याम, बड़ारि (बराड़ी), बबाइ (?), मालव, नाटमल्लार, राग श्री, श्रीगति (?) etc. ; in the *Baragîtas* e.g., असावरी, धनश्री, गौरी, सुहाइ (सुहव ?), बसन्त, श्री, भूपाली, अहिर, कल्याण, पवार (Non-Maithili Metre), पंचाली ।

11. In Nepal Dramas, e.g., *Mahâbhârata* : माल्लार, कानड़ा, काफिधनाश्री, मालधनाश्री, तोड़ीबसन्त, धुरिया मल्लार, परज (?), सोरठ (सोरठ ?), बेहाग्गला (रा) (p. 57) इमनकल्याण, मार, पहविना (पहड़िआ ?), बसन्त, अहेरावी, मरठी (महाराष्ट्री), दीपक, कल्याण, कोलाव or कोराव (कोड़ार), कुश्विल ? (p. 58), मटलोरव (? , गुवा, or गुवारी, कौशिक, केडालामाल्लर (केदारमल्लार ?), केदार (केदारा), भूपालिकल्याण, कलि (? p 69), नीरकलि (? p. 69), रामकरी, नट-मल्लाल, मालश्री, धनाश्री ब, ए, ब, अ, क, म, प, इ (p. 71), गुज्जरि,

Umapati[12] and Govindadasa[13] follow this tradition. In modern times Canda Jha revived these song metres. In his *Rámáyana* he repeatedly mentions मिथिलासंगीतानुसारेण or रागतरंगिणीमिथिलासंगीतानुसारेण। [14]

नटकान्हरा, विभास, शंकाभरण, गौरी, केडालामाहव, मल्लारि, धनाश्री, भूपाली काकैधनाश्री (काफिधनाश्री?), जयतश्री, गौडामालव, तोड़ीकन्हर, सारङ्ग, जयश्री, पहड़िया, धुरिया (धुरिया मल्लार?), देशाख, पहड़िमल्लार, भरयारि (भठियाली?), धाकड़, गौरीसारंग, भूपारिकल्याण, वरादि (वराड़ी), कोलारविभास। *Mádhavánala*: पूर्वी, कुम्चि (?) *Vidyávilápa*: तोड़ि, श्रीगौरी, वराड़ी, पहड़िया, कन्हर (कानर?), धनाश्री, राजविजय, सारंग, नाट, असावरी, सारंगी, याजमन्ती, मालकोश, मालव, ईमनकल्याण, वसन्त, श्रीराग, मारुधनाश्री, धुरियामलार, मल्लारि, काफि, विभास, दण्डक, कामोद, मलकौशिक, बेहागरा, विभास, केदारा, कोराव or कोलार (कोडार?), ललितभैरवी, भूपाली, गोपीवल्लभ, गुणकरि, काफिधनाश्री, भरयारि (भठियाली), वेलावल, गौड़ामालाव, नट,.

12. Metrical Ragas used are—नाटक (नट?), मालव, वसन्त-असावरी, राजविजय, कोड़ाव (कोड़ार), विभास, केदार, ललित।

13. Metrical Ragas used are—रामकली (रामकरी), धनाश्री, सोहनी (शोभना?), भूपाली,, कामद (कामोद?), सिन्धु वा गान्धार, वराड़ी, (श्री) गान्धार, सोहर (सूहव?), धनाश्री, सूहद, केदार, विहाग, गुर्जरी, ललित, परज (?), कोड़ार, ध्रुपदभैरव, विभास, कन्दर्प-ताल, अतिमान, देश, जयजयन्ती (?), वसन्त, पीलू, सोहनो, सोरठ, धनाश्रीमल्लार, नट, भैरवी, बारहमासा, सिन्धूड़ा, दाक्षिणात्यश्रीराग, पहाड़ी, वासाधनाश्री, कल्याणकामोद, पटमंजरी, श्रीरागखेमटा, मह्लार, विलावल or वेलाओर, नाटिका, कल्याण, सारंग, वसन्तहोली, तोड़ी, गौरी, मालवी (मालश्री), मायूर, कहरवा (५।०), इमनकल्याण, शंकराभरण, भठियाली, कान्हड़ा (कान्हरा).

14. Among the song metres he uses—सुहव, कमल (?), गौरीजोगिआ, केदारमालव, गौड़मालव, देवराजविजय, धनछीसाम्भवी, रामकरी, माधवीयवराड़ी, मंगलराजविजय, धनछीमालवीय, धनछीपंचसुरा, कामोदनाट, पर्वतीयवराड़ी, विततसुहव, भैरव, देवकामोद, कोड़ारसुहव, काफी,

Modern writers on Maithili prosody divide metres into two classes: (*i*) Mātrika metres, and (*ii*) Varṇavṛttaka metres.

(1) Mátrika Metres

1. Caupāī, 2. Dohā, 3. Soraṭhā, 4. Barabā, 5. Rolā 6. Ullāla, 7. Chappaya or Jayakarī, 8. Kuṇḍalia, 9. Gītikā, 10. Hari-Gītikā, 11. Vijayā, 12. Tomara, 13. Paddhari or Vasanta, 14. Sabaia of several kinds, 15. Tribhaṅgī, 16. Ghanākṣarī, 17. Sumeru, 18. Rūpamālā, 19. Lāvanī, 20. Sarasī, 21. Sāra, 22. Alhā etc.

The Caupāī is generally the most popular metre in narrative poetry. Grierson thus describes the use of it by one of the best narrative poets in Maithili, Manabodha:

> "The metre of the poem (*Kṛṣṇajanma*) is uniform throughout. It is a variety of the Chaupāī Chhand, containing fifteen instants in each half line, with a break after the sixth. The last three instants in each half rhyme with each other, and usually take the form of one long syllable and one short, thus: —U. Sometimes, however, they take the form of three short syllables thus . UUU ; but in every case the last syllable must be short. Usually but not always, the eleventh and twelfth instants also consist of two short syllables."[15]

This metre along with the 'dohā' and the 'chappaya' is also used at length by some Kīrtaniyā dramatists.

(2) Varnavrttaka Metres

1. Śikhariṇī, 2. Mālinī, 3. Vasantatilakā, 4. Bhujaṅga-prajāta, 5. Drutabilambita, 6. Śārdūlavikrīḍita, 7. Mandākrāntā, 8. Toṭaka, 9. Vaṁśastha etc.

These are familiar vernacular metres used in Northern India, and many others which have been recently added from other Indian Languages such as Payāra and from English such as Free Verse, Blank Verse etc. have enriched the poetic craftsmanship of Maithili.

मलार, जोगिआ, कानरराववियन, केदार, अहीर (अहिरानी ?), कलहंस मालव, कामोद, देश, वियोगिमालव, ललितविपरीत etc.

15. JRASB, 1882, p. 130.

PART II

Early Maithili Literature

CHAPTER IV

ANTIQUITY OF MAITHILI LITERATURE

I

THE OLDEST SPECIMENS

It is not known when and how actually Maithili literature first flourished. We have seen above that by about 900, Maithili language had become distinct from Māgadhī Prākṛta. We begin to get full-fledged Maithili literature from that monumental classic, the *Varna-Ratnákara*, of Jyotirīśvara. Between Nānya-deva's coming (1097) and the reign of Harisimha-deva (c. 1324), it seems music spread like any-thing in Mithilā. It is probable that during these years the language found itself used as a hand-maid to it. Specimens of Maithili from 900 to 1300, are not many; nevertheless, they deserve special consideration.

The earliest of these are, of course, the oldest vernacular names of places and persons found in the early Pañjī records, but they have not been yet explored. Next, Sanskrit writers are found using vernacular equivalents to ex-plain the meaning of uncommon words. For example, Vācaspati Miśra I (9th Cen. ?) uses the word "हर्ति" in his *Bhámatí*[1] and Vandyaghāṭīya Sarvānanda (11th Cen.) uses about four hundred Maithili words in his commentary on

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1. I. 3. i Nirṇayasāgara Ed. p. 270. See MITHI-LANKA ii p. 10.

Amarakosa[2]. This practice was continued by 14th and 15th Century writers, such as, Caṇḍeśvara Thākura,[3] Rucipati,[4] Jagaddhara,[5] Vācaspati II[6] and Vidyāpati Thākura[7].

The most extensive material which can be referred to as literature is, however, found in the *Bauddha Gána O Dohá*[8]. Variously described as

2 See Dr. Subhadra Jha, "Maithili...words...in Sarvānanda's...Amarakośa" ABORI XXI, p. 106 ff.; Dr. Sukumar Sen, "New Indo Aryan Vocables in Sarvānanda's *Tîkâsarvasva*" *Indian Linguistics*, VIII p. 126 (1940). Also see: Basant Ranjan Ray, *Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika*, San 1326, No. 2; Dr. Chatterji, ODBL I, p. 109; and N P. Chakravarty in *Journal Asiatique*, 1926, pp. 81-100.

3. Vide "Caṇḍeśvara Thākura and Maithili" by Mm. Dr. Umesha Mishra, *Allahabad University Studies*, VI pp. 349-357.

4. "Maithili Words of the 15th Century." JBORS 1928, pp. 266 ff.

5. Ibid

6 Introduction to the English Translation of Vācaspati Miśra's *Tattvacintâmaṇi*, by Dr. Umesha Mishra, Baroda, p. xxii.

7. In *Dânavâkyâvalî*, *e g.* रहित p 112 and साठी p 113, pointed out in Dr Umesha Mishra's *Vidyâpati Thâkura* p. 179.

8. There are five editions available of this work: Haraprasada Sastri's (Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, 1919), Mohammad Shahidullah's (Dacca University Journal, Vol....); Prabodha Chandra Bagchi's (*Journal of Department of Letters*, Calcutta University Press, 1938 pp. 1-156); Manindra Mohana Vasu's (Kamala Book Depot, 15, Bankim Chatterji Street, College Square, Calcutta, 1943) and Dr. Sukumar Sen's. Besides introduction and notes in these editions, critical articles on "Caryas" are by MM Haraprasad Sastri (*Calcutta Review* 1917 p. 392ff), Dr. S K. Chatterji (ODBL p. 110 ff, and *History of Bengal*, I p 383), Dr. P. C. Bagchi (*Studies in the Tantra* and *Calcutta Oriental Journal*, I p. 201); Dr. Shahidullah ("Haraprasad Samvardhana Lekha-Mala" IHQ II p. 91 and IHQ III p. 677 and V S Pd P. 1327, pp. 145-152), Shivanandana Thākura (*Mahâkavi Vidyâpati kî Bhâṣâ* p. 208); Dr. Subhadra Jha,

Old Bengali,[9] Old Assamese,[10] and Old Oriya,[11] the 'Gans' have greatest claim to be considered as Old Maithili specimens. MM. Haraprasad Sāstri discovered these texts in Nepal in 1916 and adduced them as examples of old Bengali. They consist of three kinds of works: (*a*) *Caryácaryaviniscaya* (*b*) *Dohákosa* and (*c*) *Dákárnava*. The Dohās are predominantly in Apabhraṁśa, but the *Caryágitis* and the *Dákárnava* are mainly in a modern Vernacular.

MM. Sastri's edition is often corrupt; it is based on a single Ms of a late date. Dr. P. C. Bagchi and Dr. Shahidullah have been now able to re-construct and even restore many parts of the text with the help of the Tibetan translation preserved in the *Tanjur*. But there is a great need of a Maithili edition with the help of all available material. For, in view of the remarks made below on their language it alone can finally decide many difficulties of the present text.

That the *Caryágitis* (=the songs of the acāryas or teachers) are Old Maithili specimens has been emphatically pointed out by scholars like Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana,[12] Dr. K. P. Jayaswal,[13] MM. Dr. U. Mishra,[14] Narendranatha

(*Formation of Maithili*); Binayatosha Bhattacharya (JBORS. Vol. XIV p. 340 ff) and Sasibhushan Dasgupta (*Obscure Cults as Background of Bengali Literature*, Calcutta University, 1946, pp 500 which discusses their philosophy).

9. Such as, by MM Haraprasad Sastri and S. K Chatterji.

10. Such as, Banikanta Kakati *Formation of Assamese Language* pp. 8–9 and Barua, *Early History of Kâmarûpa*, p. 318.

11. Praharaj, OCP VI p. 378-381 and Priya Ranjan Sen, (B.C.) LAW COMMEMORATION VOLUME II p. 197 ff.

12. *Gaṅgâ III*, i p. 545 and *Purâtattvanibandhâvalî* (Indian Press, Allahabad) p. 167.

13. OCP VII, Presidential Address p. lxxiv.

14. Presidential Address to Maithili Sahitya Parisad, Ghoghardiha.

Das,[15] Dr. Subhadra Jha,[16] and Shivanandana Thakura.[17] The arguments in its favour may be summed up as follows:

(1) The first ground on which the Padas are called Old Maithili specimens is that a majority of the Siddhas who wrote these Padas appear to have lived in Bihar. It is accepted by all authorities such as Grunwedel, Cordier, MM Sastri and Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana that most of them flourished in Magadha and were associated with the Vihārs of Vikramaśilā and Nālandā. (See the details below, pp. 111 ff.) The completeness with which their names occur in the earliest Maithili Classic, *Varna-Ratnákara*,[18] only confirms that they were well-known in Mithila.

(2) The language of the *Dohá-kosas*[19] of these Siddhas is a form of Apabhraṁśa, but it betrays great affinities with the language of *Kírttilatá*, *Kírttipatáká*, *Varna-Ratnákara* and *Visuddha-Vidyápati-Padávalí*. Some common features are, for example, the dominant position of the dental sibilant; the use of एँ as instrumental singular suffix; the use of *candrabindu* as a post-position; the use of *-ka* as genitive suffix; the use of *-hi*, एँ or even *-e* for locative; the use of such pronouns as मयिँ (Kānha 31), *je*, *ehu*, *tasu*, *appana* (Saraha IV, 6); the imperative ending in *-ha*, *-hi* or *-u*; present third person sing. ending in *-i*; adverbs such as *Jahi*, *tahi*, *tehi-khone*, *tá'*; and typical Maithili idioms

15. In *Mithila-Mitra*, 1930-1
16. In *Formation of Maithili Language*.
17. In *Vidyâpati kî Bhâṣâ*, pp. 208 ff.
18. p. 57 (११ख)
19. Edited by MM Haraprasad Sastri, and by P. C. Bagchi (Part I only) Publiseed by the Calcutta, University. Articles on their Language are by Dr. Bagchi (*Indian Linguistics*, V. pp. 353-55 and Dr. Shahidullah, *Les Chants Mystiques de Kanha et Saraha*, Paris. 1928 and B. K. Chaudhary in *Indian Linguistics*, VIII, pp. 35-37 and 153-68.

and words, such as, उषाक्षि, झुम्बइ, पेद्द, पडिल-खिति, घरहिँ अइसी अग्गि हुवान्तं (or घरही बइसी दीवा बाली), डाहविअ कइ_ए धूमें, उपाढ़िअ केसेँ, चउड्ढ रे, कि, पढ़िज्जइ सोवि गुणिज्जइ (cf. पढब गुनब Mod. Maithili), विनु, अवस्स, घरवइ (आ), चउदह, सिरीफल, पांक, पोक्खर, घरिणि.

(3) The morphology of the *Caryápadas* apart, even in their phonology they have striking similarity with Maithili. They have the stress on the penultimate syllable or on the last long vowels, not more backward than the third from the end.

> "In Bengali, however, the second type of stress are found in the language of the inscriptions only (Chatterji p. 280 ff.), while in Maithili the two types of stress are met with in the language of the V.(*arṇa*)-R.(*atnâkara*) as well as in the Padâvali of Vidyâpati. At any rate, there is little to prove on the basis of stress only, whether the Caryâs are in Bengali or in Maithili."[20]

The presence of nasalized sounds and the prevalence of dental sibilant may also be noted in this connection in support of Maithili.

(4) In morphology there are several important features:

(a) *Declension of Nouns*:

(*i*) The presence of all the three Maithili nominative forms—the short, the long, the redundant—is foreign to Bengali.[21]

(*ii*) The instrumental in एँ is a peculiarly Maithili feature.

(*iii*) The occasional genitive in *-ka* is found rarely in Bengali writings, but is native to Maithili. The other genitive forms in *-era*, *-ara*, *-kera*, *-eri*, etc. were common in Early Maithili[22] and have survived in *-kara* and *-kera*

20. Dr. Subhadra Jhâ, *Op. cit.*
21. Ibid. But Dr. Chatterji says "No. Of. Rama, Rama, Ramua, Râmia."
22. See examples in *Vidyâpati ki Bhâṣâ* p. 30 and in almost all old Mss of *Vidyâpati Padâvali*.

forms in Modern Maithili. Indeed, *-era* and *-eri* as genitive suffixes of pronouns are known in many more speeches (*e.g.* Bhojpuri, Assamese etc.) than Bengali and Maithili.[23]

(*iv*) The use of *candrabindu* for case-endings is a particularly Maithili feature.[24]

(*v*) "The presence of the locative in *-ta* in the Caryas suggests first its connection with Bengali. But *-ta* in extended form is met with in Early Maithili as well as in the Eastern Maithili dialect; of course, even there it is no more commonly used. In Bengali too its literary form is *-te*, while *-ta* has its use restricted to some dialects. As a matter of fact it was a loc. affix in the whole of Northern, Central and Eastern Magadhan area. It occurs in Assamese also. (Chatterji p. 750)."[25]

(*vi*) The use of तँ in the instrumental (*e.g.* in the word सुखदुखवँ) is similar to its use in *Varna-ratnákara* (p. 24-*ka* लोकतँ).

(b) *Declension of Pronouns* :

(*i*) Maithili forms (as in *Kírttilatá*) of first person singular हमो and हाउँ,[26] are found in *Caryás* 10 and 20.

(*ii*) Third person singular pronoun *te* in *Caryá* 22 is found abundantly in *Varna-Ratná-kara*.[27]

(*iii*) Peculiarly Maithili personal pronoun for emphatic 'Self' (Sanskrit *Svayam*), *apaṇe* also found in *Caryás* 3 and 22[28].

(*iv*) The first person form *mo* (*Caryá* 15) also occurs in Vidyāpati (as in Nagendra-natha Gupta : Pada 62, from Nepal Ms), and मोमे is very common in Vidyapati.

23. Dr. Subhadra Jha, *op. cit.*
24. *Vidyāpati kí Bhāṣā* p. 9.
25. Dr. Subhadra Jha, *op. cit.*
26. *Vidyāpati kí Bhāṣā*, p. 212 Dr. Chatterji tells me that these forms may be found in Middle Bengali also.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid.

(*v*) Second person forms like तों, तोभे, तोहर, तोरा, तोहरि, etc found in *Caryás* are common Maithili forms.

(*vi*) Third person form *se* is common to Maithili and *Caryás*.

(*vii*) Interrogative pronouns such as *Koe* (*Caryá* 43), *Káhi* (*Caryá* 1), etc. are all found in Vidyāpati.[29]

(*viii*) Such forms as *e* (*Caryá* 6) and *ehu* (*Caryá* 26) are very familiar to Early Maithili.

(*c*) *Conjugation of Verbs, and Allied Things:*

(*i*) The basic roots √*thák* and √*ach* found in *Caryá* are both quite common in Early Maithili,[30] though in Modern Maithili the latter is more common, and the former is replaced by √*thik*.

(*ii*) "Verbal forms in -*u* are used in the past tense in the Caryās, in Bengali and in Early Maithili. Chatterji explains their presence in the Caryās as due to Western influence (p 946) but such cases were quite common in Early Maithili. In V(arṇa)-R(atnākara) it is a genuine Early Maithili form"[31] See, for example, *Caryâ* 11.

(*iii*) Third person singular forms in -*ti* are found in

"the Caryās and in Vidyāpati, but they do not occur in Bengali; while the Third Person in -*thi* found in the Caryās is foreign to Bengali but indigenous in Maithili."[32]

(*iv*) The use of *áva* (as in *Caryá* 22 in *band*-

29. E. g. in Padas 150 and 719 of Khagendranatha Mitra's Edition of *Vidyâpati Padâvalî*.

30. *Vidyâpati kî Bhâṣâ* p. 131.

31. Dr. Subhadra Jha, *op. cit.* Dr. Chatterji, however, says "-*ti*, -*ta*, <-*nti*" is a natural development in Bengali.

32. Ibid.

hávae) to form causatives is common with Maithili.[33]

(*v*) The use of -*ia* (as in *Caryá* 3, 13, 19 *kia* ; 10, 33 *chádia* and 1, *karia*) to form passives is common with Vidyāpati (of course, with the variation that -*a* in -*ia*, undergoes a phonetic change—it becomes *e*).[34]

(*vi*) The -*ila* and -*iba* forms in the past and present tenses respectively apparently seem to be non-Maithili features, but, they are both very abundant in Early Maithili as found in *Varna-Ratnákara* (p. 6, p. 14, p. 40 *Kaili* or *Kaila*) and in *Kirttilatá* (*e.g. purila* p. 44 Dr. Saksena's Edn.) and also

> "in the Chikā Chiki dialect (of Modern Maithili)—the area wherein the Ancient University of Vikrama-śilā had its site, the professors of which are mainly the composers of these songs."[35]

(*vii*) "Further, such verbal forms as are derived from the past participial forms of the old transitive verbs change with the gender of the nominative. This has been the case with Maithili of the Early as well as of the Modern period. This has never been the case in Bengali."[36]

Moreover,

> "The verbal forms derived from the past participle form of the old transitive verbs agree in gender with the accusative in Caryās in several cases. This was also the case in Early Maithili."[37] For example, *Cāryā* 57 : *ṭuṭi geli*.

33. *Vidyāpati kī Bhāṣā* p. 125. Dr. Chatterji tells me New Bengali has -*āwae*>*āy* forms.

34. Ibid, p. 119.

35. Dr. Subhadra Jha, *op. cit.* (Dr. Chatterji explains to me Kaila as a different case: *Kaa, Kaya + alla, illa* = *Kaila*).

36. Ibid, Dr. Chatterji thinks that even this may be found as a gradually decaying form in Middle Bengali.

37. Ibid, Dr. Chatterji points out some exceptions in Middle Bengali, e.g. चलिलि राही ।

(*viii*) Imperative second person in *-ha* (such as, in *Caryá* 28 *bindhaha*; *Caryá* 41 *khelaha*; *Caryá* 45 *chebaha*) is a pronouncedly current form in Maithili.

(*ix*) Unlike Bengali, where *ne* or *henák* follows it, conjunctive in *-i* are found in *Caryás* and in Maithili.[38]

(d) *Gender*

(*i*) Feminine nouns have feminine verbs and feminine adjectives in the *Caryás* as in Early Maithili. Examples are in *Caryá* 5: *Didhi tángi* and in *Caryá* 80: *tohori kudiá*.[39]

(*ii*) *Ági* (=fire) is used in feminine in *Caryá* 47 and in Early Maithili.[40]

(e) *Adverbial Forms:*

Such forms as *kaisana*, *jaisana* are all profusely found in *Varna-Ratnákara* and *Vidyápati-Padávalí*. But they are very much unfamiliar in Bengali. (Later forms केह्न, केहेन, जेह्न, जेहेन are, however, found in Bengali as well as Maithili.)

(f) *Proverbs and Idioms of Caryás which are found in Modern Maithili also:*

(*i*) दिवसइ बहुड़ी काग डरे भाश्र। रात भइले कामरु जाश्र ॥, (*ii*) पहिल बिश्रान, (*iii*) बलाद बिश्राएल गविश्रा बॉम्हे (*Cf.* बड़द बिश्राएल गाए रहल बॉम्ह), (*iv*) बेक स साप बढ़िल जाश्र, (*v*) हाक पाड़इ, (*vi*) छान्दक बान्ध (=छान्द बान्ह), (*Cf.* मनबोध IV verse 47) (*vii*) श्रागन घर, (*viii*) दुलि दुहि पिठा धरण न बाइ। रुखेर तेन्तलि कुम्भीरे खाइ ॥ (*ix*) थिर करि चाल, (*x*) देल पसारा

38. Ibid; also see ODBL II p. 1006.

39. More examples are in Caryā 8, 18 etc. Parallel forms in *Varṇaratnâkara* p. 4 (*tîni rekhâ samanviti grîvâ*), p. 5 (*seho mandi hothi*), p. 11 (*nirmâuli svarganârî baisali*) etc; in see *Vidyâpati kî Bhâṣâ* p. 15.

40. *Vidyâpati kî Bhâṣâ* p. 15. Cf. "Khari Virahanali, agi" in *Viśuddha-Vidyâpati Padâvalî*.

(*Cf.* पजावा or पसारि देल), (*xi*) एड़िएउ, (*xii*) जे जे आएला ते ते गेला, (*xiii*) डमरु बाजइ वीरनादे, (*xiv*) दुहि गेल कन्या॥

(g) *Vocabulary*:

Though many words are common to almost all languages allied to Māgadhī, yet there are certain typical Maithili words in the Caryās which deserve to be noticed, such as,

आजि (= Mid. Mai. आजि or आइ), साङ्कन (= Same in Early Maithili and Mid. Maithili); चापी (*Cf.* Mod. Colloquial Mai. चापि देब); भिड़ि; तेन्तलि (= Mod. Maithili तेतरि); बिआती (? Varṇaratnākara form; Dr. Shahidullah connects it with Middle Maithili बाइति; may be connected with Mod. Maith. बिअउती); सूड़िनि; सासु; टेंगी (= Mod. Mai. टेंगारी); बेढ़िल; हरिणा (= Mod. Maith हरिना); गराहक (= गाहक); बिआरी (= Early Maithili same form in Varṇaratnākara), थाही; उपाड़ि; उवेसें; चगेड़ा (= Mod. Maith. चंगेरा. चकेरा); खाटे; कोठा; पतिआइ; ; भात; आवेश; एतकाल; बाड़ी (= Mod. Maithili sense, garden); उगत; चौदिस; दिट (Vidyāpati, page 142 Vidyabhuṣaṇa and Khagendranātha Edn.); डाल (= डारि); पइठा (= Early Maith. Vidyāpati *Ibid* Pada 79 पइठल); भणइ (= भनइ, भनथि); काहि (Vidyapati *Ibid* Pada 719); आस; दुहि; उठि; खाइ; मुइ सुणि; समाअ (= समाय); एकेली (*Cf.* Vidyāpati) जउतके (*Cf.* Vidyāpati); etc.

(5) The local colour and the imagery in the Caryās are, as pointed out by Mm. Haraprasad Sāstri,[41] appropriate to the area familiar with boats and rivers. One may refer to the other name of Mithila, viz., Tīrabhukti; to the fact that in early years she was known

41. *Calcutta Review*, (1917), p. 406.

as a marshy tract (स्रोतृमत्) and was made habitable by the "Fire" brought by Videgha Māthava; to the elaborate discussion of boats and rivers in the *Varna-Ratnákara*; and to the predominance of rivers in the geography of the land.[42] The profusion of imagery from cowherd's life as found in the Caryās is natural in Mithila where the goāra or gopa population predominates and the curd and milk of which place are traditionally famous (*cf. Áin-i-Akbarí* Eng. Tr. II, p. 152.

(6) It is true that Buddhistic thoughts did not directly influence the Thought and Life of Mithila, but there was nothing to prevent these Siddhas, who flourishod in the South-East borders of Mithila, from using the vernacular of the province to popularise their teachings. There might have been greater response in lower classes of that part of Mithila to their teachings than we know today, making it necessary for the Brahmanical leaders of the province to make so great an effort to re-establish Brahmanical thought; and certainly Buddhistic influence did penetrate Mithila so far as her Tāntric culture goes.

(7) Lastly, it must be borne in mind that Maithili characteristics of the Caryās cannot be explained away as mere corruptions of the text brought about by the Nepalese and Maithila scribes.[43] Indeed, it seems that the fact that these Padas have found so far mainly Bengali editors accounts for many 'restorations' and 'improvements' in the text and the 'interpretations' being given a Bengali garb. A faithful edition alone can, therefore, bring to light the true character of the language of the *Caryápadas.*

42. See above Chapter I, pp. 10-11.

43. As maintained by Dr. S. K. Chatterji in ODBL and in *History of Bengal I.*

To sum up, the language of the *Caryápadas* represents a Proto-Maithili dialect of the Chikā-Chiki area, midway between Standard Maithili and Standard Bengali, having some (esp. archaic) features in common with other Māgadhan speeches.

The Authors of the Caryápadas (*Round About 800 to 1100*)

These poems were composed by some of the 'Siddhas' (saints) who are variously known as 'the eighty-four Siddhas' and 'the Vajrayāna monks', famous in the religious history of Early Medieval India. Most of these are well-known names in the realm of Buddhist Tāntric literature and a large number of *Sádhanás* written by them have been published in the *Sádhaná-Málá*. "Some Biographical accounts of these authors are also recorded in Tibetan works like the *Pag-Sam-Jon Zan*, Taranatha's *Geschieste* (c. 1500 A D) and the *History of the 84 Siddhas* published in German by Arthur Grunwedel."[44] "Bhadanta Sankṛtyāyana has recovered (their) complete personal history (and has concluded that they) flourished and wrote in Magadha. His paper on this history has been translated into French and is published in the *Journal Asiatique*. From this recovery of personal biographies of these writers we can now trace with certainty the chronological sequence of the *Siddha* authors,"[45] (except Caṭila and Dhenḍhanapa who are known to us only in the list given in the *Varna-ratnákara*).

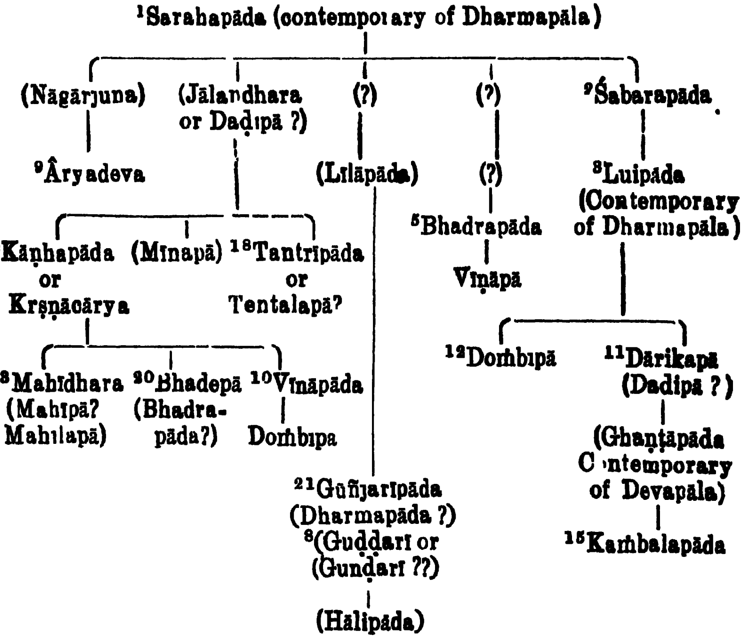
Traditionally Luipāda is known as the first Siddha, but it seems that the oldest and the

44. Quoted from Binayatosha Bhattacharya's essay in JBORS XIV p. 342.

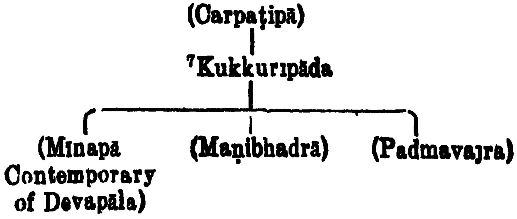
45. OCP VII Presidential Address, p. lxxiv.

most important was Saraha.[46] The following charts of the line of disciples will make the chronology of the authors clear:[47]

(A)



(B)



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46. Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana, *Purātattvanibandhāvalī*, p. 147.

47. These charts are based on Rāhula's essay 84 Siddhas in his *Purātattvanibandhāvalī* pp. 146-204.

(C)

(Nāgabodhi)

[22]Virupā (Viruvapā)
(Contemporary of Devapāla)

Dombipā — Kāṇhapā

(D)

(Tillipā)

[17]Tāḍakapā (Nādakapā?)

[6]Śāntipā (Contemporary of Mahīpāla) — (Dīpaṅkara)

(E)

[5]Bhusuku
(Contemporary of Devapāla)

(F)

[14]Kaṅkaṇapā
(c. 705)

(G)

[28]Cāṭilapā
(Before 1101 and *Varṇaratnâkara*)

(H)

[16]Jayānandī
(Jayānanta?)

(I)

[22]Dheṇḍhanapā (Before 1100? and *Varṇaratnâkara*)
(Dheṇḍhanapā cannot be the same as Tentalapā or Tantrīpāda, for both names occur simultaneously in *Varṇaratnâkara*)

Altogether, these twenty-two or twenty-three *Caryá* Siddhas lived during the reigns of Dharmapāla (769-806 or according to others c. 633), Devapala (809-849) and Mahīpala (974-1026) the Pāla rulers who exercised their sway over Mithila and Magadha. The extant poems of Kānha are 13, of Bhusuku 8, of Saraha 4, of Kukkuri 3, of Lui, Śabara and Śanti 2 each, and of the rest one each.

1. *Saraha*[48]—was variously known as Rahulabhadra, Mahāśabara Saraha, Ācārya Mahāseni Saraha or Saroruha Vajra. He was born in a Brāhmaṇa family at Rajñi (?) in the Pracyadeśa. He lived with a girl who used to make arrows (शर's) for his use, whence he is said to have derived his name. He passed his days at the Nālandā University also. Some sixteen of his vernacular works are said to be preserved in Tibetan translation.

2. *Śabara*[49]—was Saraha's principal disciple. He got his name probably from passing his days in the company of Śabaras on the Śrī-parvata (?). He was different from his namesake in the 10th century. About six of his vernacular works are said to be translated into Tibetan.

3. *Lui*[50]—was reputed to be the greatest of the Siddhas. He served probably at the court of Dharmapāla as a 'Kāyastha' (clerk or writer). Traditionally he is known to have lived in Vārendra, whence it seems that a Bengal village in Mayurbhañja State is known and worshipped after him.[51] He left several vernacular works, five of which are found in Tibetan translation.

4. *Kānha*[52]—was also known as Kṛṣṇapāda or Kṛṣṇācārya or Kṛṣṇavajra. He was called Mahācārya, Upādhyāya, Mantraṇācārya and Choṭa Kṛṣṇa. He is said to have been a Karṇāṭa Brāhmaṇa. He lived at Somapuri Vihāra in district Rājaśāhī. He was reputed to be the

48. Padas 22, 32, 38, 39.

49. Padas 28, 50.

50. Padas 1, 29.

51. "Contribution of Bengalis to Hindu Culture" Haraprasad Sastri JBORS Vol. V pt. iv, p. 509.

52. Padas 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, 24, 36. 40, 42, 45.

most learned of these Siddhas. His Padas are the most numerous of those available.

5. *Bhusuku*[53]—was a well-known figure at the Nālandā University. He was born in Saurāṣṭra (Saurāṭha village in Mithila? or Gujarat?) According to one section of opinion Bhusuku and Śāntideva were the same, but Mr. Vasu and Dr. Shahidullah have come to the conclusion that they were different persons.

6. *Śántideva's*[54]—life as recorded in a Manuscript reveals that he was originally a Kṣatriya prince. He later became the disciple of one 'Mañjuvajra', and worked as the commander of Magadha for a while. In his last years he lived at Nālandā, earning his designation 'Śāntideva' from his peaceful nature. Rāhula Sāṅkṛtyāyana identifies him with Ratnākara-Śānti-Bhikṣu, Master of the Eastern Gate of the University of Vikramaśilā. He was, if this identification be correct, once the Head of Somapuri Vihāra and travelled to Malavā and Siṁhaladvīpa in the reign of Mahīpāla. He lived for about a century. Nine(?) philosophical and 23 Tāntric works and one Chanda work are to his credit.

7. *Kukkuripáda*[55]—was born in a Brāhmaṇa family of Kapilavastu.

8. *Gundaripáda*[56]—was originally a carpenter or potter of Disunagara(?).

9. *Áryadeva*[57]—also called Karṇaripā—was a bhikṣu at Nālandā; he is different from his name-sake who was a disciple of the great philosopher Nāgārjuna.

53. Padas 6, 21, 23, 27, 30, 41, 43, 49.

54. Padas 15, 26.

55. Padas 2, 20, 48.

56. Pada 4.

57. Pada 31.

10. *Vínápá*[58]—was a Ksatriya of Gauda and a great expert of lute (Vīṇā).

11. *Dárikapá*[59]—was once a ruler of Orissa. He became Lui's disciple when the latter reached Orissa in the course of his travels. Later on, he is said to have attained Siddhi in the company of a prostitute's daughter at Kāñcīpurī.

12. *Dombipá*[60]—was a Ksatriya. Tārānatha says that he attained Siddhi ten years after Virūpā.

13. *Mahídhara*[61]—was a Śudra of Magadha.

14. *Kankanapā*[62]—was of aristocratic family in Viṣṇunagara (?) and was of the same family as that of Kaṁbalapā.

15. *Kambalapá*[63]—was born in the royal family of Orissa.

16. *Jayánandí*[64]—was originally a Brāhmaṇa of Bhaṅgala-deśa (modern Bhagalpur).

17. *Táḍakapá*[65]—was a Kāśmīrī living in Magadha. He studied at Nālandā and was Mahāpaṇḍita of the Eastern Gate of Vikramaśiiā—he was a disciple of Tillipā who died in 1039.

18. *Tantripáda* (Pada 25)—was born in a Tatamā (tanner's) family in Ujjain.

19. *Bhádepá* (Pada 35)—was born in a painter's family in Srāvastī.

20. *Gunjarípáda* (Pada 47).

21. *Viruva*(*Virupá*)*páda* (Pada 3)—was born in 'Triuara' (Tripurā ?), lived at Nālandā and travelled widely.

22. *Cátilapá* (Pada 5).

23. *Dhendhanapáda* (Pada 33).

58. Pada 17. 59. Pada 34. 60. Pada 14.
61. Pada 16. 62. Pada 44. 63. Pada 8.
64. Pada 46. 65. Pada 37.

It is beyond the scope of the present work to discuss the philosophy of the *Caryápadas*.[66] They are by their very nature, obscure and their obscurity is increased by the corrupt text, often contaminated by the copyist or the editor. "The subject matter of these (poems)....is highly mystical, centring round the esoteric doctrines and erotic and yogic theories and practices of... (later) Buddhism. The Sanskrit commentary on (them), being itself in a highly technical jargon, does not help to make the sense of the text wholly clear to modern reader, though it quotes extensively from a similar literature which is mostly in Sanskrit."[67] "The poems in the *Dohákosas* or collection of Dohās by Saraha and Kānha, are not so mystical, although abstruse enough..."[68]

They are written in a special terminology which "is characterized in the text as sandhyā-bhāṣā. Pandit Vidhushekhara Shastri, with the help of a large number of texts, pointed out that it should be corrected as Sāndhya-bhāṣā meaning "intentional speech" and not "the twilight language" as Dr. H. P. Shastri maintained and as some scholars still continue to maintain in spite of what has been said to the contrary. The Tibetan translation of the *Caryápadas* and their commentary now amply confirms what Pandit Vidhushekhara Shastri suggested."[69]

66. See for this, Vasu's Introduction to *Caryâpadas*; P. C. Bagchi's "Some Aspects of Buddhist Mysticism in Caryāpadas" *Calcutta Oriental Journal* I, p. 201 ff, *Studies in Tantra* and *Vishva-Bhârtî Quarterly*, 1946; and Shashibhushan Das Gupta "Obscure Religious Cults as Background of Bengali Literature," Calcutta University 1946, pp. 500 which gives a detailed study of the philosophy behind the *Caryâs*.

67. *History of Bengal*, I, p. 384 ff.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid.

The Caryās are important in the history of Maithili Literature for constituting the link between the Sanskrit Udbhaṭa poetry and the Apabhraṁśa-*cum*-vernacular-*cum*-Sanskrit Pada writing (a short poem of about ten lines having a refrain (ध्रु०) and a rāga indicated in which it is to be sung). The growth of the song metres recorded in Jayadeva and Locana can be found illustrated in them, though they are mainly in simple Caupāī metres.

The following Padas are quoted as specimens :—

1. *Pada 6* (राग पटमञ्जरी—भुसुकुपादानाम्)

काहे रे घेणि मेलि अच्छहु कीस ।
वेढ़िल हाक पड़अ चौदीस ॥ (२)
अपणा मासें हरिणा वैरी ।
खनह न छाड़अ भुसुकु अहेरि ॥ (४)
तिन न च्छुपइ हरिणा पिवइ न पाणी ।
हरिणा हरिणीर निलअ न जाणी ॥ (६)
हरिणी बोलअ सुण हरिणा तो ।
ए वन च्छाड़ी होहु भान्तो ॥ (८)
तरंगन्ते हरिणार खुर न दीसइ
भुसुकु भणाइ मूढ़ हिअहि न पइसइ ॥ (१०)[70]

2. *Pada 8* (राग देवक्री — कम्बलाम्बरपादानाम्)

सोने भरिती करुणा नावी ।
रूपा थोइ नाहिक ठावी ॥ (२)
वाहतु कामलि गअण उवेसें ।
गेली जाम बाहुड़इ कइसें ॥ (४)
खुन्टि उपाड़ी मेलिलि काच्छि ।
वाहतु कामलि सद्गुरु पुच्छि ॥ (६)
माङ्गत चड़हिले चउदिस चाहअ ।
केडुआल नाहि कें कि वाहवके पारअ ॥ (८)

70. Bagchi's edition, p. 112.

बामदाहिण चापी मिलि मिलि मांगा ।
बाटत मिलिल महासुह साङ्गा ॥ (१०)[71]

3. *Pada 27* (राग कामोद—भुसुकुपादानाम्)

अधराति भर कमल विकसिउ ।
बतिस जोइनी तसु अङ्ग उल्हसिउ ॥ (२)
चालिअउ ससहर मागे अवधूइ ।
रअणहु सहजे कहेइ ॥ (४)
चालिअ ससहर गउ णिवाणें ।
कमलिनि कमल वहइ पणालें ॥ (६)
विरमानन्द विलक्षण सुध
जो एथु बुझइ सो एथु बुध ॥ (८)
भुसुकु भणइ मइ बुझिअ मेलें ।
सहजानन्द महासुह लीलें ॥ (१०)[72]

There are several other authors who have written similar Buddhistic Dohās or Padas in Proto-Maithili. No account of their work can be given, as they are not yet available.

II

THE VARNA-RATNAKARA[73]

यश्चत्वारि शतानि बन्धघटनालङ्कारभाञ्जि द्रुतं
श्लोकाना विदधाति कौतुकवशादेकाहमात्रे कविः ।
ख्यातः क्ष्मातलमण्डलेष्वपि चतुः षष्टे कलाना निधिः
संगीतागमनागरो विजयते श्रीज्योतिरीशः कृती ॥[74]

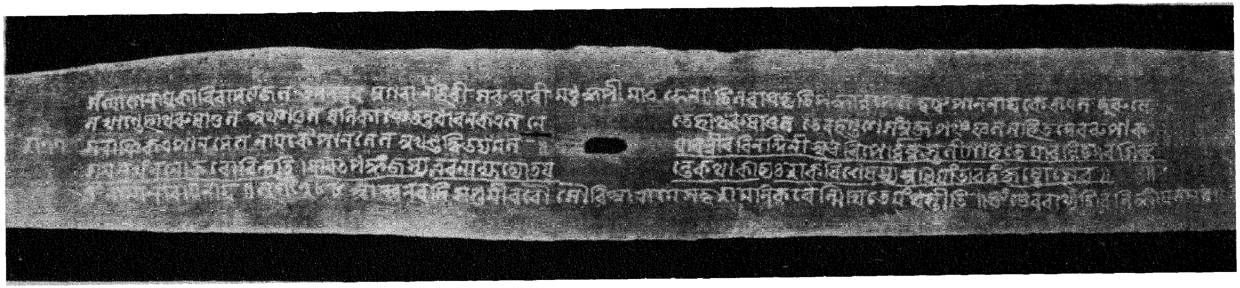
71 Ibid, p. 114.

72. Ibid, p. 132.

73. Ed. with detailed English and Maithili Introductions by Dr. S. K. Chatterji and Sri Babuaji Miśra, Royal Asiatic Society Bengal, 1940, Ms. of La. Saṁ. 388 (1507 A.D.), compiled from two sources. The title of the work is consistently given as वर्ण रत्नाकर, though the rubric preceding each set of description is Varṇana.

74. *Subhāṣita Bhāṇḍāgāram* quoted by Babuaji Miśra in the Maithili Introduction to Jyotirīśvara's *Varṇaratnākara* (Royal As. So. Edn.)

THE MS OF JYOTIRISHVARA'S *VARNARATNAKARA* COPIED IN L A SAM 388 (1507 A D)



The Last Page

Courtsey Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal

The first completely undisputed work which stands at the head of Maithili Literature is Jyotirīśvara's *Varna-ratnākara.* It was discovered by M.M. Haraprasad Sāstri, who described it in the following words:

"The last Maithili Ms obtained during these years under review is that of the Varṇana-Ratnākara by Jyotirīśvara Kaviśekharācārya. The Ms is dilapidated in the extreme. But the portion that is still in good preservation is written in bold and beautiful hand. The character is ancient Maithili which can be scarcely distinguished from Bengali as there are more than 50 per cent of expressions that are Bengali. The book belongs to the early part of the 14th Century. No Bengali or Maithila Ms of that age has yet been discovered. The subject matter of the book is very curious. It gives the poetic conventions. For instance, if a king is to be described, what are to be the details; and so on. Sometimes the conventions are very amusing. I will give the description of a pimp; she must be about a hundred years old, with wrinkles all over her body, her hair as white as conchshell, her head high, her body without flesh, her cheeks all shrunken, her teeth all fallen. She must be a (sister) of Nārada (the god of quarrels) and an expert in bringing two persons together, and so on. This book seems to have guided the genius of Vidyāpati. As regards the antiquity of the work, the author is already well-known from a Ms of *Dhūrttasamāgama-Nāṭaka* in the Durbar Library. The Nāṭaka was composed by the same Jyotirīśvara Kaviśekhara during the reign of Harasimha Deva, the last of the Karṇāṭaka kings of Mithila, whom Prof. Bendell placed in or about 1324."[75]

Most of the points about Jyotirīśvara's work have been neatly summarised in the above note. Jyotirīśvara tells us that "his father's name was Dhīreśvara, and his grandfather was Rāmeśvara, that he was a high court official, a Vedic priest, and a scholar of philosophy also, one

75. Quoted from report of the "Search of Sanskrit Mss 1895-1900" (ASB), by Dr. S. K. Chatterji, Introduction to *Varṇaratnākara*. p. x.

who in addition knew many languages, was a votary of Śiva, and an expert musician besides, He was in the court of a king of Karṇāṭa dynasty who defeated a Mohammedan invader."[76] The name of this king is given as 'Harasiṁha'[77] in some Mss, and as 'Narasiṁha' in many other Mss. It seems that Jyotirīśvara lived at the courts of both kings[78]—it is, however, held (wrongly perhaps) in certain quarters[79] that the reading Narasiṁha alone is genuine and that he is the predecessor of Harisiṁha Deva, Narasiṁha I (1174-1226). In support of this contention it is held that the name of Jyotirīśvara is not found in the Pañjī-records and therefore he must have flourished earlier than Harisiṁhadeva who organized them. The proper answer to this argument is not that the Pañjīs are the works "of an uncritical epoch", the authority of which can be challenged. For, the omission of a line in Pañjīs is not generally without meaning ; it may mean the discontinuance of that particular line. Nor does it mean that he flourished before the creation of Pañjīs. As for the argument that there is no internal evidence in *Varna-Ratnákara* to show that it was contemporary of the great social event in Mithila—the systematic organization of Pañjī

76. So says he in the Introduction to his *Dhūrta-samāgama.*

77. The commoner spelling of this name is Harisimha, See *Râjanîtiratnâkara* by Caṇḍeśvara edited by K. P. Jayaswal, p. 13, f. n. 2, and Intro. to *Varṇaratnâkara*, p. xviii.

78. See *Râjanîtiratnâkara*, p. 21, where we are told of Harisimhadeva's minor successor Nrsiṁha II (spelt as Narasiṁha by Vidyāpati in his *Puruṣa-Parîkṣâ* 1. 4, p. 27), the patron of Vidyāpati's grandfather, Rāmadatta (Vide—*Nepal Cat.* Introduction p. xii and xix, and also p. 20 and 131 ; Ms. of 484 La. Sam.=1133 A. D.) It thus confirms the tradition that Vidyāpati's grandfather was a contemporary (brother ?) of Jyotirīśvara.

79. Such as, by Babuaji Mishra and Babu Bholaladasa.

records, it may be pointed out that the word "षडक" (p. 41 क) and the following passage should be carefully studied:

> गोत्र मेलापक भउ. पूगयज्ञोपवीतदान निर्व्वहु. द्वादशक.नवपञ्चक. तृतीये-कादशक. चतुर्द्दशक. समसप्तक [७४क]षडष्टक प्रीतिषडष्टक इथि आठहुका योनमध्य उत्तम योन निर्व्वहु.[80]

This passage in all likelihood indicates that the genealogical Pañjis were highly valued and that something like the modern '*uchchaṭi*' ceremony-*cum*-'Siddhānta'-*cum*-'Asvajana-patra'-granting-ceremony was known in the days of Jyotirīśvara.[81]

There are other reasons why the work of Jyotirīśvara should be placed in about 1324 A. D. Not only philologically it is right to do so, but the title "ratnākara" is significant. We cannot but associate it with the famous "ratnākaras" of Caṇḍeśvara in this very decade. Lastly, as Dr. Chatterji says, the presence of a fairly large number of Persian words in it supports this conclusion.

There is no positive evidence to prove that Jyotirīśvara was the cousin-brother of Vidyāpati's grandfather, except that the two were probably contemporaries at the court of Narasiṁha II.

The *Varṇa-ratnākara* (the ocean of 'Varṇas' of descriptions) is a long prose work covering about 78 leaves (or 156 pages) in Ms. It is divided into seven chapters,[82] suitably called

80. p. 72 *kha*/73 *ka*.

81. We should not expect mūlagrams (probably an earlier thing) and Pāñji-names at the earliest stage, though note in his drama *Dhūrttasamāgama* he mentions about himself 'पल्लीजन्मभूमिना'.

82. There is one more chapter (of 8 pages) in the Ms. as available to us now; but it seems to be not connected

'waves' (kallolas), as the work is an 'ocean (ratnakara) of descriptions'. There are indications to show that originally probably there was more unity in the plan of the work than appears from the present text,[83] each chapter being dominated by some one distinct subject.

Thus, perhaps the first chapter called the Description of the City (नगरवर्णना) was made up not only of the lower castes etc. but also of the descriptions of jewels, clothes, fine stuffs, tents, gambling houses, doctors, astrologers, the fort. etc.; the second chapter called the Description of the Nayaka (नायकवर्णना) described all the paraphernalia of Śṛngara—the hero, the heroine, her friends etc., and might have well included the descriptions of the states of lovers, of the pimp, of eight kinds of heroines and of the prostitutes; the third chapter called the Description of the Palace (आस्थानवर्णना) dealt with almost all it contains now—the court, whence the king goes to his Durbar, Gymnasium, bathroom, and shampoos and has his food and sleep—and then, night, darkness, noon, clouds; the fourth chapter called Description of Seasons (ऋतुवर्णना) naturally followed the third, in describing the various seasons of the year; the fifth chapter called the Description of the March (प्रयाणकवर्णना) might have taken up the Royal family, hunting and

with the original work. It either contains matter which may very well have formed part of the common floating mass of such material or is made up of matter which should have been included in any of the first seven chapters rather than have formed an eighth chapter of a confused hodge-podge.

83. In the present text, of course, many discrepancies are seen. Thus, Vohitavarṇanā is unnecessarily brought again in the so-called VIII Kallola as Vahitravarṇanā; Vidyāvantavarṇanā, Dyūtavarṇanā, Veśyavarṇanā, Kuṭṭanīvarṇanā and Kāmāvasthāvarṇanā may fit in the I or II Kallola; the various lists of Siddhas, Grahas, Purāṇas etc. may fit in the VI Kalloa, etc.

war—forests, mountains, hermitage; the sixth chapter called the Description of Bhaṭa etc. (भट्टादिवर्णना) gave the arts—poetry, music and dancing and should have included 'कलावर्णना'; and the last chapter opened with graveyards and passed on to the description of deserts, seas, holy places, rivers, boats, mountains, etc.

Roughly this arrangement is followed in the present Ms, but it is often vitiated. Nevertheless, there is nowhere a dearth of interest in its subject: "it lies both in the profusion of its details, and in the fact that it includes descriptions of almost all things worth des-crib ing in human life."[84] So says Dr. Chatterji:

> "The obligation to follow the accepted conventions was imposed upon the writer by the rules of rhetoric. The descriptions or the descriptive parts in (this) work are frequently very summary, and at times they are nothing but a more string of comparisons. But the connected objects are fully enumerated, and the order of events in narrating a process given in full. Frequently the author gives no description but merely a number of names of connected objects to which reference is expected to be made in fully describing something."

It is a compendium of life and culture of medieval India in general and of Mithila in particular. The atmosphere is uninfluenced by the coming in of the Turks, it is purely Hindu - the few Persian words present may owe their origin to the copyist. The author "takes us through the city and gives us a little glimpse into the ugliness that was in a medieval Indian city, as in all cities of other ages and climes; he tells us what knaves and beggars we meet, what low and vulgar fellows congregate and shout and jostle and move in dirt and filth."... He introduces us "to the noises and sounds of the city, through playing all kinds of musical instruments, singing of ballads and songs connected with Lorika and shouts of people crying "take ! give ! break ! raise ! give again ! increase"

84. Quotations henceforth are from Dr. Chatterji's Introduction to "Varṇaratnākara" unless otherwise stated.

and all kinds of seemly and unseemly acts which would come to one's sight in a city with its motely crowd."

He gives us at the same time romantic pictures of

"noble heroes and beautiful heroines, perfect in their personal charms and accomplishments. He shows us round the court, and tells us who is who in the throng. He gives us little inside views of the intimate life of the princes and noblemen, shows us how they bathe and what they eat, and even lets us have a peep into their sleeping chamber."

"How lightly does he step among all sorts and conditions of men, and their wares and their stock-in-trade! He is our guide through a fashionable gambling house, and he bewilders us by his familiarity with the various games that are on, as well as by his knowledge of the ways of the men who gather there; he is apparently a connoisseur knowing the various kinds of stuffs, and gems, and spices, and perfumes, which the *baniyâs* of the bazar, and the drapers and gem-cutters and druggists sell. He stands to watch the troops on the march, or a royal cavalcade going out to hunt in the jungles of Tarai; and he knows the Rajput soldiers riding past by their clans, and he knows what weapons they wield, and what horses they ride, or what dogs are led in the leash."

Indeed, the author's interest is all-embracing—he gives the names of all Purāṇas, and all vāyus (winds), and all ādityas (suns) which might be the common medieval lore but the large number of synonyms that he gives for everything he describes; the enumeration of various moves in gambling and chess; the list of passes in shampooing (some thirtysix of them are listed, such, as कुलकर, हथफोकर, एकहथा, दोहथा, मुहबल, etc.); the kinds of crocodiles, flowers, trees, boats etc.—are certainly unique with him. Like Pepys, he is deeply in love with all aspects of humanity.

He has given expression to his sense of beauty as well as to that of the terrible. Of course, his comparisons are stock ones, but

occasionally there are passages which reveal him to be a poet and justify his title, 'Kavi-śekharācārya'. This is seen when, for instance, he compares the smile to rippling waves on the ocean of milk moved by the southern breeze; or when he piles abstract and concrete image upon image; or when he describes various objects of nature—morning, noon, evening, night, the seasons and the forest. The following description of the moon illustrates his sehse of the beautiful:

> निशाक नाइकाक शङ्खवलय अइसन आकाश. दीक्षित(क) कमण्डल (or दीक्षितक मण्डल) अइसन चन्द्रकान्तक प्रभा अइसन. तारकाक सार्थवाह अइसन शृंगारसमुद्रक कल्लोल अइसन. कुमुदवनक प्राण अइसन पश्चिमाचलक तिलक अइसन. अन्धकारक मुक्तिक्षेत्र अइसन कन्दर्पनरेन्द्रक यश अइसन. लोकलोचनक रसायन अइसन एवम्विध चन्द्र उदित भउअह ।[85]

The terrible did not escape his notice. He was careful to devote one full chapter to it. He describes the gruesome cemetery along with its blazing funeral pyres, corpses with their skulls, their hair, their entails, fat, brains, blood and the Mythical figures (such as dākinīs, rākṣasīs, vetālas and yoginīs) and real *Kápálikas* and *aghorís*. He also surveys the desert, the surging ocean, the steep and bold mountains. The following passage on the darkness of night will demonstrate his success in this direction:

> पाताल अइसन दुःप्रवेश; स्त्रीक चरित्र अइसन दुर्लक्ष्य; कालिन्दीक कल्लोल अइसन मांसल; काजरक पर्वत अइसन निविल पापक सहोदर अइसन शरीर, आतंकक नगर अइसन भयानक; कुमन्त्र अइसन निफल; अज्ञान अइसन सम्मोहक; मन अइसन सर्व्वतोगामी; अहङ्कार अइसन उन्नत, परद्रोह अइसन अभव्य; पाप अइसन मलिन; एवंविध अतिव्यापक दुःसंचर दृष्टिबन्धक.भयानक. गंभीर शुचि,सूची)भेद अंधकारदेषु ।[86]

85. p. 52 *ka*.

86. p. 16 (31 *ka*).

काजरक भीति तेलें सिचलि अइसनि राति, पछेआँकें केओ काजरक मोट कुअल अइसन मेघ, निबिल मांसल अंधकार देखु, मेघ पुरित आकाश भए गेल अछ, विद्युल्लताक तरंग ते पथदिशाज्ञान होंतें अछ, लोचनक व्यापार निष्फल होइतें अछ। यं राति पातक शब्दें तरुज्ञान, दुइरकशब्दे जलाशयज्ञान, चटकक शब्दे वनकज्ञान, आगिक धोतें पुर ज्ञान, चरखाक शब्दे पथ ज्ञान, वचनक शब्द परापर ज्ञान, विज्ञ जनहु दिगभ्रम जं राति ॥[87]

It should be noted that almost all ideas associated with darkness have been given.

The description of the forest is a very happy example of the author's excellence in both fields. The forest is spoken of as inhabited by various *Mleccha* tribes and yet it has the song of *Kinnaras* and *Vidyádharas* ; indeed, the forest is visuallized as the abode of horror and at the same time also of beauty.

Jyotirisvara, however, is probably most happy in describing his own vocation. He gives an elaborate account of the *Bháṭa* or official bard of the Court. He was skilled in all branches of learning, and was above the professional singer and music master, called *Vidyávanta.* He devotes full three sections to dancing—both male and female dancers. This is how his bard looks like—

मारपरिकली परिहने. साठ सोनाक टाड चारि परिहने खड्नीक पाय एक मथा बन्धने सोन सूचीक कराओ एक. देवगिरिआ पछेओला एक फाएड बन्धने. तीषि. चोषि बाङ्कि. नीकि सोनाके परजे निङ्खानी. लोहाक निर्म्मंडलि सोनाक डोर छुरी एक बाम क इ बन्धने ॥[88]

Dr. Chatterji has compared Jyotiriśvara's style with that of the Kathakas of Bengal. He says :

87. Pp. 16-17 (31|*kha*).

88. p. 44 (55 *ka*).

> "his catholic observation, like that of our *Kathakas*, who to drive a moral lesson home must largely draw upon their own observations in life and must bring in verisimilitude in their narrations, did not consider any aspect of life with which he had to come in contact as too low or beneath his notice."

He points out that the *Varnaratnákara* covers almost all subjects on which the Kathaka had set passages.

Indeed, (1) the expressions like पुनु कहइसन, देखु and अपर प्रकार; (2) the profuse alliteration and rhyme or jingle in the prose[89]; (3) the punctuation mark after certain words—etc. point to this very fact. We have in later Maithili dramas some instances where these passages were recited by Kīrtaniyā-actors, e.g., in *Srí-Krsna-Janma-rahasya*. But there is no hand-book of Maithila Kathakas available. There is, however, one very palpable difference between the Nineteenth century *Kathaka*-books of Bengal and this work, viz., in the third chapter we have a somewhat connected story: we find the king going to gymnasium, and bath, and a whole day's activity is then described.

This work was a veritable cyclopedia and had great importance for the succeeding generations. That it was read[90] and respected till quite late is attested by Maṇikara who copied it from two Mss in 1507. It seems to have supplied Maithili poets both in Mithila and Nepal with stock material for their composi-

89. E.g. चिताक उद्योत, चलइते खद्योत। शिवक फेत्कार, डाकिनीक सञ्चार।

90. Like the Varṇakas or typical descriptions in "Jaina Apabhraṁśa literature" (Vide—OOP XII, p. 472 ff ; where a city, a king, a queen, a sanctury, a bath house, a gymnasium, a palace, a forest, etc. are described exactly as in the framework of *Varṇaratnâkara*) See S. K. Chatterji's Intro, to *Varṇaratnâkara*, p. xiv.

tions. Vidyapati's genius was definitely moulded by this work.[91]

III

OTHER PROTO-MAITHILI REMAINS

Other remains of Proto-Maithili are in the *Prákrta-Paingala* and in Maithili "Avahattha" works. The *Prákrta-Paingala* has examples in it from "the floating mass of popular poetry and song current among the poets and the peeple of Northern India during the period 900-1400 A. D. Some of its peems are declared to be in old Bengali." Shivanandana Thakura has shown that one of them, among many others, represents Maithili.[92]

Vidyapati uses Avahaṭṭha extensively. Whether this Avahaṭṭha is only a younger form of Śaurasenī Apabhraṁśa (as Dr. S. K. Chatterji suggests) or that of Magadhī Apabhraṁśa (as Dr. P. C. Bagchi says), or it has an independent existence (as indicated by Shivanandana Thakura and Dr U. Mishra by the name 'Maithili Apabhraṁśa' or by Dr. B. R. Sakesena by 'Maithila Apabhraṁśa), it contains several features in common with Early Maithili, such as: [93]—

(1) feminine gender of adjectives and verbs;

(2) *-nhi* (*-nha*), *á*, or absence of any postposition, for plural;

91. Cf. the description of prostitutes in *Kīrtilatā* with that in *Varṇaratnākara*, and note how closely the latter's images helped Vidyāpati in such a poem as "कबरी भए चामरि गिरिकन्दर मुख भए चाँद अकासे" etc. which is very much like *Varṇaratnākara's* description of a nāyikā.

92. *Vidyāpati kī Bhāṣā*, p. 184 f. n. 1.

93. Ibid, pp. 190-203.

(3) *-e* or कै, or without any post-position ending in nominative;

(4) *-e* and *-hi* ending in instrumental (के after words ending in *á*) सहुँ and सओ in ablative;

(5) *-Karí*, *-Karo*, *-Kareo* (variants of *-kara*) for genetive;

(6) *-e*, एं and *-hi* for locative;

(7) use of *Candrabindu* for case-endings;

(8) *-o*, ओ (1st person), *-si* (2nd person), *-i*, *-e*, *-thi* (3rd person) in present tense;

(9) *-u*, उँ and *-ha* in imperative mood;

(10) *-ia* in past tense *-iha* in future tense;

(11) *-nte* *-ntá* (=? *-ite*, इतैं in Mod. Mai.) for *Krdanta*;

(12) *-i*, *-e*, for *Púrvakálika*;

(13) nasal vowels;

(14) *ra* and *la*, 'ṣa' and *kha*, *ya* and *i*, *ya* and *ja*, *va* and *ba*, *na* and 'ṇa' are interchangeable sounds.

CHAPTER V

AGE OF VIDYAPATI THAKURA (1350-1450)

I

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE AGE

The age of Vidyāpati was the same to Maithili Literature as were the age of Shakespeare to English Literature and the age of Aeschylus to Greek Literature. The most direct and original expression of the national genius of Mithila, the lyric, found its greatest exponent, Vidyāpati, in this period. It became immediately so popular that it was on the lips of the scholar as well as those of the illiterate cowherd. It found a natural home everywhere; in the palaces of the Kings and Queens as well as in the huts of the poor, in the most populated areas as well as in the far off secluded forests. Everyone found his emotions expressed in its various forms.

It is difficult to connect this age with the age of Harisimhadeva for want of details, but it is clear that its glory was only due to the final blooming of the renaissance of music and dancing introduced by Nānyadeva and perfected in the age of Harisimhadeva. We can infer it from "the fact of Jyotirīśvara taking pains to vaunt his accomplishment in it in the *Pancasáyaka* and the *Dhúrtta-samágama*, and from the elaborate accounts of the musicians and singers with their corteges

which we find in the *V*(arṇa)-*R*(atnākara)."[1] The *Rāgataranginī* describes how lyric grew with the development of music in Mithila ; the example of the *Caryās* and that of Jayadeva's triumph in producing padas set to music must have further vitalized this tradition in this period.

Another great reason why Vidyāpati could succeed so well in writing in his vernacular is that by his time vernacular had widely acquired prestige as a fit vehicle of expressing the highest emotions. Prākṛta, which was given the advantage over Sanskrit by the author of *Karpūrámanjarī*,[2] seemed "Nīrasa" (dry) to his age and the *desila baaná* (deśabhāśā, *literally*, the country speech) alone seemed to be capable of being widely appreciated.[3] Vidyāpati's Age could not, however, completely shake off the Prākṛta and Apabhraṁśa ; he was himself influenced very much by the Śauraseni Prākṛta in the writing of his Avahaṭṭha works—the Śauraseni being so far the polite vernacular fit to be used for poetry. By discarding it finally and using Maithili alone in later years, Vidyāpati shows the passing away of the Age of Prākṛta and Apabhraṁśa and the coming of the Age of Modern Vernaculars.[3]

Thirdly, it was during this age that Maithila once again became the leader of Hindu

1. Dr. S. K. Chatterji, Introduction to *Varṇaratnākara*, p. xix.

2. I. 8 quoted in Introduction to *Kīrttilatā* by Dr. B. R. Saksena.

3. सक्कय वाणी बहुअ न भावइ, पाउँअ रसको मम्मन पावइ ।
देसिल बअना सब जन मिट्ठा, तँ तैसन जम्पओ अवहट्ठा ॥

Kīrttilatā, p. 3 Dr. Saksena's edition. Note that Jyotirīśvara regards the cultivation of Avahaṭṭha as one of the 64 Arts (*Varṇaratnākara* p. ५५ क).

culture and Sanskrit Learning. On the first occasion some 1500 years ago, she had saved the orthodox Faith from non-orthodox followers of Buddha. On this occasion she had to face a much more disastrous crisis. "Little by little, the Hindus lost their political independence. The strain on the cohesion of the Hindu society was fast reaching the breaking point. Once more the Brāhmaṇa essayed. He reinforced the tottering edifice as far as possible. Having lost control of politics....he confined himself to social and domestie life."[4] Mithila stood foremost in the contribution to this common effort to save Hindu civilization. Her rulers also came to her help. They defended the country from 'Turkish' brutalities and patronised Sanskritic studies. Scholars from all over the conntry flocked to Mithila. In particular, she was the resort of students from Bengal for about three centuries after the conquest of the latter province by the "Turks."[5] (=Muslims) Now these Mithila seholars had equal loze for their vernacular; they took pleasure in compositions inspired by Sanskrit models.

To sum up, the age of Vidyāpati was, like the age of Shakespeare, highly proficient in music; saw the final rise of Modern Languages; and lastly, it was the golden age of Maithila scholarship. Vidyāpati represents the culmination of all these tendencies of the age—he was one of the greatest musicians of his times; he shows how Apabhraṁśa and Prākṛta came to be given up for a Modern Language; and in an eminent way, he represents the influence of Sanskrit learning of his times.

4. K. P. Jayaswal. Introduction to MMC I p. iii; see also, S. C. Vidyabhushana *History of Indian Logic* p. 355.

5. Dr. Chatterji, Introduction to *Varṇaratnākara*, pp. xx-xxi.

As to the excellence of the literature of this period it is sufficient to refer to the fact that the leading figure—Vidyāpati—has been naturalised in two sister literatures (Hindi and Bengali). It has been rightly observed: "Seven cities might have contended for the honour of the birthplace of Homer but with the exception of the poet Vidyapati I can recall no other name of a poet claimed as their own by two peoples speaking two different languages". (Maithili and Bengali).[6] Sir George Grierson called it to be an event "unparalleled in the history of literature,"[7] and prophesied that "even when the sun of Hindu religion is set, when belief and faith in Krishna and in that medicine of disease of existence, the hymn of Krishna's love is extinct still the love borne for the songs of Vidyāpati in which he tells of Krishna and Rādhā will never diminish"[8]

Unfortunately, it is not possible to study chronologically the literary activity of this period. The life and character of various authors are almost entirely unknown. Many of them are no more than mere names and there is no material to work on. Often a stray lyric—and may be of the first rate, though generally it is not the case—quoted in this Anthology or that is all that remains of them. There is equally great uncertainty as to the authenticity of many poems because either the 'Bhanitās' are misleading or are missing. Under such circumstances we are brought back to the constellation of the stars, viz., Vidyāpati, around whom we may group all of them.

6. Quoted by Harinandana Thakura 'Saroja' in *Mahākavi Vidyāpati*, p. 55.

7. *Maithili Chrestomathy*, Introduction to Vidyapati's poems p. 34.

8. Same as f. n. 6 above, p. 56.

He is not only the model of the age, but represents it also in every way. In his inspired moments, in his life and manners, in his leanings towards Sanskrit, in his mastery of music, in his relations with the court and in several other strong and weak points he is the mirror of the age.

II

VIDYAPATI THAKURA

बालचन्द विज्जावइभासा, दुहु नहि लग्गइ दुज्जन हासा ।
ओ परमेसर हर शिर सोहइ, ई णिच्चइ नाअर मन मोहइ ॥

—*Kirttilatá*, Introduction.

Vidyāpati[9] is one of the greatest names in Indian Literature. He is the earliest major star in the firmament of Vernacular Poetry in Northern India. He was born in about the same period when Chaucer (born c. 1340) was shaping the fortunes of English Literature and was thus very much earlier than Śaṅkaradeva (born 1449), Caṇḍidāsa (born 1418), Rāmānanda Rāya (born about the middle of 15th cen.) Kabira (born 1399), Tulasidāsa (born 1540), Mirābāi (born 1497) and Sūradāsa (born 1435).

His Ancestors

The ancestors of Vidyāpaii are very well-known to us. They belonged to the Gaṛha

9. The authorities on Vidyāpati are mentioned in Section IV of this Chapter. The name Vidyāpati was thought to be a mere surname by Beames (IA II p. 37). It was also the name of a contemporary of Maharaja Karṇa of Bikaner (c. 1632); Vide-Vallabhadeva's *Subhāṣitāvalī* and Introduction to Śrīdharadāsa's *Saduktikarṇāmṛta* p. 87. Vidyāpati is also the name of a tribe (see, Risley's *the People of India*).

Bisaphi[10] family of Maithila Brāhmaṇas of Kāśyapa Gotra. The earliest known person in their family (बीजी-पुरुष) was one Viṣṇu Thākura. His son was Harāditya and his grandson Karmāditya Tripāṭi (Tripaṭhin?). Karmāditya is identified with another Karmāditya who is said to have built a temple of Śakti (Haihaṭṭa-devī) in 1332 at a place called Hābīdiha,[11] and who styles himself as a Minister of State.

10. It is a village in the subdivision of Madhubani, Jaraila Parganna, Police Station Benipatti, District Darbhanga, and is situated near Kamtaul (O. T Ry) In the 12th generation after the poet his descendants left it for village Saurāṭha near Madhubani (O. T. Ry.) where they are living even today. The family diety of the poet and the relics of his home are, however, still extant at Bisaphi.

11. The verse inscribed there runs thus:

अब्दे नेत्रशशाङ्कपक्षगदिते श्रीलक्ष्मणक्ष्मापतेर्मासि
श्रावणसंज्ञके मुनि तिथौ स्वात्या गुरौ शोभने।
हावीपट्टनसञ्ज्ञके सुविदिते हैहट्टदेवी शिवा
कर्मादित्य सुमन्त्रिणेह विदिता सौभाग्यदेव्याज्ञया॥

BAKHŚI and Candā Jha (in his translation of *Puruṣaparīkṣā*) Who is the husband of this queen Saubhāgyadevī? It cannot be Nānyadeva (1097-1133) (as maintained in the Advertisement to *Likhanāvalī* p. 3—it might be a confused interpretation of the following lines on Dhireśvara in the introduction to Gaṇapati Thākura's *Gangā-bhakti-taraṅgiṇī*.

सद्विद्याकुलयोर्विशेषमखिलाम्विज्ञाय नान्यो
(नान्यवंशीयः?) ददौ वृत्तिं यस्य पितामहाय।
मिथिलाभूमण्डलाखण्डलः श्रीधीरेश्वरसूनुरल्पम-
सावम्यस्य आह मतं गंगाभक्तितरं ॥).

For, the date in this inscription is 213 La. Saṁ. (=1332 A. D.) and it would mean that Karmāditya lived for about two hundred years.

The fact seems to be that the author Gaṇapati took pride in mentioning that his father's grandfather Śivāditya obtained favours at the court of Nānyadeva's family. Therefore, the Karmāditya who was Gaṇapati's great-great-grandfather might have been an employee at the court of Harisimhadeva's father or grandfather and might have

Karmāditya had two sons—Devāditya (*alias* Śivāditya) and Bhavāditya. The elder son, Devāditya, was Sāndhivigrahika (Minister of Peace and War) and seems to have obtained the title of Mantri-Rājatilaka for helping Emperor Allāuddin in the seige of Raṇathambhore (1300-1301 A.D.)[12]

Now, this Devāditya had seven sons. The eldest one Vīreśvara, was as important a figure as the father. He succeeded to his father's post of Minister for Peace and War under Maharaja Śakrasingha (c. 1284-96). He was the author of a popular Dharmaśāstra treatise *Dasakarmapaddhati*. He is also credited with having done several Mahādānas and having caused temples & tanks to be constructed and dug. He possessed the famous gem known after him, the 'Vīreśvara' gem.[13] Vīreśvara's son, the famous Nibandhakāra Caṇḍeśvara Thākura, united in himself the distinguished offices of the Chief Judge (Prādviveka) and the Minister of Peace and War. He was not only a profound Scholar of Politics (cf. his *Rājanītiratnākara*), Astronomy (cf. his *Sūryasiddhānta*) and Dharmaśāstra, but also a creditable warrior who fought successfully against Muslim invaders. He had no

erected the temple in 1332 in the reign of Harisimhadeva. It is, however, pointed out by Pt. Ramanatha Jha that Gaṇapati names one Yogīśvara as his ancestor at the end of this work and that therefore he may not be identified with Vidyāpati's ancestor Gaṇapati (*Mithila* XXXVIII, 5). But, compare, *Puruṣa-Parīkṣā* where Gaṇeśvara is said to be a minister at the court of Maharaja Harisiṁhadeva, and also note that Dr. D. C. Sen says that Yogeśvara was Gaṇapati's father's name. (*History of Bengali Language and Literature* under Vidyāpati).

12. Compare f. n. in Candā Jha's translation of *Puruṣa-Parīkṣā*, where Devāditya is called "Hamvīra-Dhvāntabhānu." He was evidently a contemporary of Mahārāja Śakrasimha father of Harisimhadeva.

13. See *Puruṣaparīkṣā* (Alasa-Kathā). He is styled in Pañjī as 'Paṇḍāgārika', probably because he lived in a hut made of leaves. (Cf. *Mithira* XXXVIII, 5).

issue, and hence Vireśvara's line did not proceed further.

The second son of Devāditya was Gaṇeśvara Thākura He was styled as 'Mahāsāmantādhipati' (great leader of Barons). He is known as the author of *Sugatisopána* and *Gangápattalaka*. His elder son Rāmadatta, was Minister for Peace and War at the court of Kārṇāta Narasinghadeva II, and wrote a *Dasakarmapaddhati* and a *Mahádánapaddhati* which are still used and respected in Mithila. Gaṇeśvara's second son was Govindadatta,[14] the author of *Govindamánasollása*, a devotional work on Viṣṇu Both of them seem to have died childless.

The third son of Devāditya was Dhīreśvara. Dhīreśvara alone continued the line. He held the post of Mahāvārttika-Naibandhika He had two sons—Jayadatta and Kīrtti. Jayadatta in his turn had also two sons—Gaurīpati and Gaṇapati. Gaṇapati married the daughter of one Śrikara of the family of Buddhabālae named Gaṅgā-Devi, and begot the Poet–Vidyāpati.

The fourth son of Devāditya was Jaṭeśvara the Bhāṇḍārika, the fifth was Haradatta[15] the Sthānāntarika; the sixth was Laksmidatta the Sāndhivigrahika and Mudrāhastaka; and lastly, the seventh was merely a courtier (Rājavallabha). They all seem to have died childless.

Thus we find what distinguished positions the ancestors of Vidyāpati occupied in public life. They had made great contributions to the social and moral well-being of Mithila.

14. Is he the minister of Mahārāja Kirttisimha mentioned in Kirtilatā III Pallava (Dr. Saksena's edition, p. 74)?

15. Is he the same as Haradatta mentioned in Kirtilatā III Pallava (Dr. Saksena's edition p. 74)?

His Life

There have been various dates suggested as the probable year in which Vidyāpati was born.[16] It seems that the poet was a playmate (cf. his title खेलन कवि') of Mahārāja Kırttisingha who was a minor[17] when his father Mahārāja Gaṇeśvarasingha was murdered in 252 La. Sam. (=1372 A. D.)[18] If this was true, then we should believe the tradition which says that Vidyāpati used to visit Gaṇeśvara's court along with his father, as a young boy. This means that he should have been at least ten or twelve years old in 252 La. Sam. We further learn from tradition that Mahārāja Śivasingha was 51 years at the time of his coronation and that he was two years younger than the poet. Now we know from two sources that Śivasingha formally ascended the throne

16. 1358 Nagendranatha Gupta; 1357 Haraprasad Sastri; 1350 Benipuri; 1372 B. K. Chatterji; 1380 Satishachandra Ray; 1357-59 B. R. Saksena; and 1360 Umesha Mishra, Ramanatha Jha and Shivanandana Thakura. These dates differ also because they are differently computed owing to different ways of determining a date in La Sam.

17. Compare the great gap between the 252 La. Sam. (=1372 ? A. D.) when Gaṇśvara died and 1401 A. D. when Ibrahim Shah came to the throne after which alone Ibrahim could attack Tirhut and reinstate Mahārāja Kırttisiṁha. The gap can be explained by assuming these princes as minors at the time of their father's death, though this would be an unusually long period of unrest.

18. K. P Javaswal wrongly held that in the phrase लक्खनासेना नरेशा लिहिअ जावे पक्खा पनचावे, जावे also meant 5 (ज=जगण=5) and 2 (वे), i e, 52, and therefore the real date given in the chronogram was 252 plus 52=.04 La. Sam. (JBORS XIII parts III IV pp. 299-300). This is not possible because the poet is known to have finished the copying of the *Bhâgavat* in 309 La. Sam. and because he wrote *Likhanâvali* in La. Sam. 299 at the same place—Raja Banauli—thus proving that in 304 La. Sam. he could not have been a 'Khelana Kavi' to Mahārāja Kırttısingha.

in 293 La. Sam.[19] This date agrees with the above tradition. We may, therefore, safely assume that he was born in about 241 La. Sam. (= 1360 A. D.).[20] This date is sufficiently distant from Caṇḍeśvara's date (c. 1315-1324), the only definite dates known of his ancestor.

He was a class-fellow of the famous Naiyāyika Pakṣadhara Miśra and probably received his education from the latter's uncle Hari Miśra. It seems, however, that he did not pursue his studies very long and took to a courtier's life quite early. He became a prominent figure at Mahārāja Kirttisimha's court and composed *Kirttilatā* in his praise (in about 1402-5).[21]

After the death of Mahārāja Kīrttisingha, Vidyāpati went to the court of the Devakuli branch of Oinivāras. Here it was that his genius found a full flowering. We do not know if he lived with Bhavasingha, but he was long associated with his son Mahārāja Devasingha[22]

19. (i) the grant deed of Bisapi, & (ii) an Avahaṭṭha poem describing the event: अनल रन्ध्रकर लक्खन णरवइ etc., though people have doubted the authenticity of these. *Vide* JASB 1895 Proceedings, Canda Jha's Appendix to his translation of *Puruṣa-parīkṣā*; JASB 1914 15 p 419.

20. With this date, it is not possible to explain how Vidyāpati could have written under the patronage of Bhogīśvara Thākura (the father of Gaṇeśvara) such a fine poem as Pada 80 ; Nagendranātha Gupta's edition. There is obviously some mistake in the mention of the name of Vidyāpati in the Bhaṇitā or in that of the patron, or it may be that it is some later person whom we do not know as yet.

21. See Dr. B. Majumdar *Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Patrikā*, LIII, i. p. 30.

22. Compare the Bhaṇitās in NG & in NP (several songs) with "हासिनि देइ पति गरुड़नराएन" and the following verse from a work written under Devasingha, *Bhūparikramā* :

देवसिंहनिदेशाच्च नैमिषारण्यवासिनः ।
शिवसिंहस्य पितुः सुतपीठनिवासिनः ॥

and his grandson Mahārāja Śivasingha. It is possible that even before Śivasingha was actually crowned in La. Sam. 293 (=1412-13 A.D), he was the virtual ruler. Vidyāpati seems to have made contacts with him quite early.[23] As early as La. Sam. 291 (=1410-11 A.D.) he is known to have asked a copy of a commentary on the *Kávyaprakása* to be made dated in the 10th day of the dark half of the lunar month of Kārttika.[24] Mahārāja Śivasingha and his famous consort Mahādevī Lakhimā liked him very much and when he was crowned as King, Vidyāpati also obtained the gift of his native village in recognition of his services to literature. He wrote the *Kírttipatáká* in praise of Śivasingha in old Maithili Avahaṭṭha; completed his famous collection of Sanskrit short stories, *Purusa-Paríksá* and wrote a host of Maithili songs, some of which he introduced for the first time in a Sanskrit drama *Goraksopákhyána*.

Vidyāpati seems to have been known widely among the contemporaries of Śivasingha: his works refer in particular to Śivasingha's cousin Rudrasingha,[25] to Arjuna[26] and Kumāra Amara.[27] He also refers to Kāyastha Minister

पञ्चषष्टिदेशयुतां पञ्चषष्टिकथान्विताम् ।
चतुःखण्डसमायुक्तामाह विद्यापतिः कविः ॥

(quoted by SINGH, p. 71.)

23. Considering the large number of poems and other works written unde his patronage.

24. See JASB 1915, p 392.

25. See Nagendranatha Gupta Pada 612. It is more right to identify Rudrasimha with this figure than with Oinivāra Rudranārāyaṇa. Rudrasimha's relation to the ruling family will become clear from the following geneology supplied by Pt. Ramānātha Jha from the Pañjis: Rudrasimha was Mahārāja Śivasimha's cousin and the grandson of Mahāmahattaka Kusumeśvara and the son of Rāmeśvara.

26-27. Arjuna is mentioned in Rāmabhadrapur Ms.

Amṛtakara,[28] Minister 'Mahesa' or 'Mahesarī,[29] Ratidhara,[30] Sankara[31] and one Dāmodara.[32]

When Śivasingha was finally defeated by Muslims in 299 La. Sam., Queen Lakhimā lived as a fugitive in the Nepalese village of Rajābanaulī in Saptari district for twelve years. In the year 299 La. Sam. the poet is known to have got constructed a tank there,[33] and to have composed a manual of letter-writing in Sanskrit, called *Likhanávali*[34] From 299 La. Sam. to 309 La. Sam. the poet seems to have occupied himself in copying the *Srímad-Bhágavata*, the autographed Ms. of which in the poet's own hand in still extant.[35] It is said to have been copied as a *Punya Kárya* to atone for his

only; Amara in Nagendranatha Gupta's Pada 723, and *Râmabhadrapura Ms.* Pada 410; both Arjuna and Amara are sons of Tripurāsimha (the second son of Bhavasiṁha, father of Mahārāja Devasiṁba). See SINGH, p. 83.

28. Narendranāthadāsa, *Vidyâpati Kâvyâloka*, Introduction.

29. N. Gupta Pada 76, and 609; not identified. He is called minister and the king's favourite.

30. N. Gupta Pada 373; may be identified with Ratidhara (c. 1400) of Karmahe Tarauni family. (See *Patna University Journal*, I p. 13).

31 N. Gupta Pada 357. Not identified.

32. N. Gupta Pada 120. Is he the same as Dāmodara *alias* Digvijaya mentioned in the Acārapradīpa of one Gaṅgāviṣṇu (JASB 1903 p. 38), quoted in IHQ XV Pt. 3, p. 215?

33. Tradition.

34. It was written when the poet along with the queen took refuge with one Purāditya at Rajābanaulī in Saptari district and refers to him as his patron.

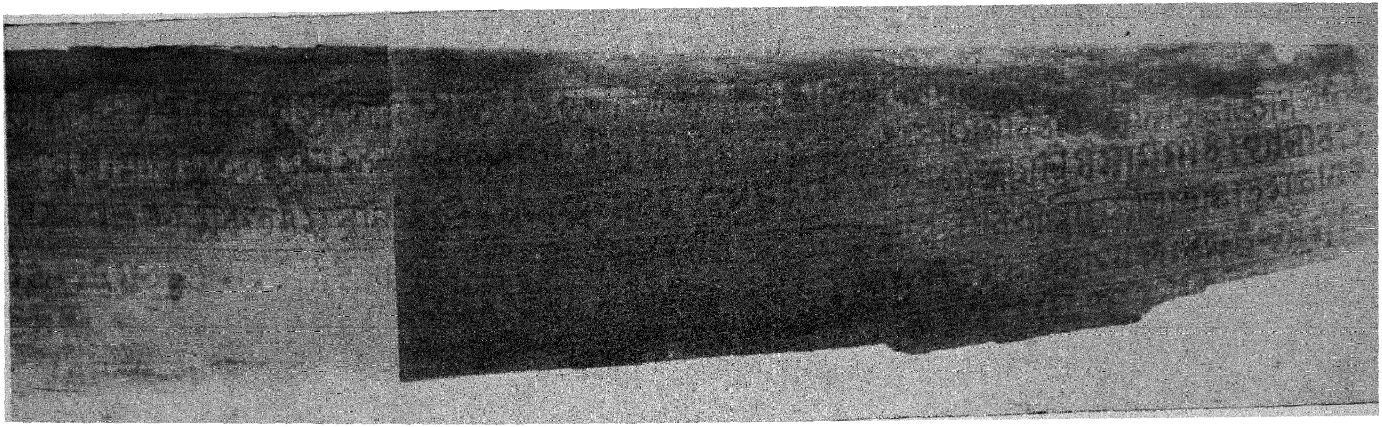
35. The Ms. is in Raj Library, Darbhanga It was finished in 309 La Sam. See J. K. Mishra in "Maithili" (a Ms. magazine published from Sarisava) and R. Jha "Mahākavi Vidyāpati Thākura-ka Hastalikhita Bhāgvata," (*Bharati*). The date is not 349 or 389 La. Sam. as wrongly deciphered by some scholars.

having sung all his life of earthly love in the name of Lord Kṛṣṇa and his consort Rādhā. The turn in his career that might have come at this time was, however, not due to any necessity of Prāyaścitta. It might have been due to the sorry course of events, which had an adverse effect on his spirits. The poet may not have also written anything amorous now that he had crossed his youth. Yet we have a feeling that the large number of love poems that have come down to us with the names of Lakhimā and Śivasingha in the 'Bhanitā', is due to this long sojourn of the poet with unhappy Lakhimā making it possible for the poet to read it out to her and to copy out the whole of the *Bhágavata*, and also probably to translate portions of it in the vernacular songs. Indeed, we find him writing love poems even after the death of Lakhimā; during the reign of Mahārāja Padmasingha and perhaps that of Dhīrasingha, he composed love poems which are extant even to this day.[36] There is no doubt that with the advance of his years Vidyāpati himself must have gradually felt more interest in Dharmaśāstra and Karmakāṇḍa than in love poetry. As a court Paṇḍita, we may conclude, the poet was obliged to recite and explain the *Bhágavata* to forsaken Lakhimā. It might have had nothing to do with the poet's own feelings.

After the death of Lakhimā, the poet went to the court of Padmasingha, and later to that of his widow-queen Viśvāsadevī under whose orders he composed the *Gangávákyávalí*. She has also been mentioned as his patron in *Saivasarvasvasára*. A majority of the poet's

36. Śivanandana Thākura's *Viśuddhavidyâpati Padâvalī* Pada 25 (Bhaṇitā with Padmasiṁha) and RT p. 85 (Bhaṇitā with Kaṁsa-dalananārāyaṇa (Dhīrasiṁha ?)).

VIDYAPATI'S HANDWRITING



The Ms. of *Shri-madbhagavat* copied by Vidyapati in La. Sam. 309 (1428 A. D.)

Courtsey the Editor Mithilamihira.

songs on Śiva and Gaṅgā might have been written during this time.

The Smṛti work *Vibhágasára* reveals that after the extinction of this branch of Oinivāra Dynasty, the poet went to the collateral line of Harisinghadeva and wrote it under Harasinghadeva (c. 1433).[37] Under the orders of Dhīramati, the queen of this very king, he wrote the *Dánavákyávalí*. But we do not know of any authentic poem written under his patronage.

Vidyāpati is next known to have been at the court of Narasinghadeva's successor, Dhīrasingha (c. 321 La. Sam. =1440 to 627 La. Sam.=1446). We know of only one probable authentic poem composed at his court.[38]

The last king under whom the poet wrote his works was Dhīrasimha's successor, Bhairavasingha, under whom he wrote *Durgábhaktitaranginí*. He mentions therein the younger brother of Bhairavasingha, Candrasingha. Tradition says that Vidyāpati retired from court life at the time of Bhairavasingha[39]; indeed, there are

37. Vide—*Kandaha Inscription*, JBORS, March. 1934.

38. RT p. 85-86.

विद्यापति सुनु बर जौवति आनन पावए कोइ ।

कंसदलननाराएन सुन्दर तास रमनि पए होइ ॥

The Viruda कंसदलनप्रत्यक्षनारायण is used for Dhīrasimha "Harinārāyana" in *Durgâbhakti-Taraṅgiṇī* (Introductory verses) by the poet himself.

39. Advertisement to *Likhanâvalî*, p. 2. One Mahārāja Rāghavasimha is referred to in some unauthentic poems. In some of them this is undoubtedly the name of the Maithila king Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha of Khaṇḍvalā dynasty; in other cases, the author is Bhañjana Kavi the court poet of the latter.

We have three names of Vidyāpati's patrons which cannot be identified under the present state of our knowledge of his times—'Vaidyanātha' (RT p. 108), 'Mrlikabahārdin' (N. Gupta Pada 438) and 'Gyāsadīna Sultāna'

no traces of his further connection. with the court after his reign.

He appears to have passed his last days in peaceful family life. He is said to have married twice.[40] His first wife was the daughter of Harivaṁśa Śukla of the family of Sambala-saṅkari. From her he had two sons Harapati Thākura, a scholar and a poet, and Narapati Thākura. His second wife was the daughter of Raghu Thākura son of Goṇṛhi Thākura of the Khaṇḍavalā-kula. From this marriage he had a son, Vācaspati Thākura, and a daughter, Dullahi, who was married to one Rāma of Supatami-gaṅgauli family. We know of one of his daughters-in-law—Candrakalā who was a poetess of no mean order—she is likely to have been the wife of Harapati Thākura because he alone seems to have continued the line of the poet, others may or may not have been ever married, ahd because he alone is known to have been a poet himself.

It is related that Vidyāpati sensed his end thirty-two years after Śivasingha's disappearance, when one day he saw in a dream the latter's dark image.[41] It is believed that the dark coloured sight of a dead person in a dream forebodes one's own death. Śivanandana

(RT p. 57). This last may be identified with Ghiyasuddin Azam Bengal king (1393-1410) (N. Gupta thought him to have been on the throne in 137[illegible] but see Dr. M. K. Bhaṭṭasali's "Coins and Chronology of Sultans of Bengal" quoted by Dr. B. Majumdar in *Nâgarî Pracâriṇî Patrikâ*, LIII, i, p. 22.)

40. R. Jha "Vidyāpati Thakura-ka Vaṁśa" in *Mihira*.

41 सपन देखल हम शिवसिंह भूप। बतिस बरस पर सामर रूप॥
बहुत देखल गुरूजन प्राचीन। आब मेलहुँ हम आयु विहीन॥
(quoted by N, Gupta, Intr.)

Thākura quotes[42] from a popular Purāṇa (the *Brahmavaivarta*) to show that the fruits of such a dream are fulfilled in eight months. Thus by calculating from Pauṣa 296 La. Sam., when Śivasingha is said to have disappeared for ever, S. Thākura concludes that Vidyāpati might have seen the above dream in Māgha or Phālguna of 328 La. Sam., and that eight months later in Kārttika 329 La. Sam. he should have died. This confirms the tradition that makes his death anniversary on the thirteenth day of the bright-half of Kārttika.[43] In terms of the Christian Era, this will mean that Vidyāpati died somewhere in October 1448.

There are several stories current as to how the poet met his end. It is said when his end was very near, he asked his daughter[44] to make preparations for his journey to the bank of Gangā. The poet was not able to reach the bank when the hour of death arrived. Tradition says[45] that the Ganges was flooded that night and her waters reached the spot where the poet breathed his last. A Śiva-linga sprung up where his pyre had been, and it, and the

42. *Mahākavi Vidyāpati*, p 38. He quotes from Kṛṣnakhaṇḍa of *Brahma-Vaivarta Purāṇa*, Chapter 70. It must be pointed out, however, that much reliance cannot be placed in such beliefs.

43. Cf. the traditional verse (which is evidently not by Vidyāpati himself) :

विद्यापतिक आयु अवसान। कार्तिक धवल त्रयोदसि जान॥

(quoted by N. Gupta)

44. दुल्लहि कतय बुधि माय। कहुन ओ आवसु एखन नहाय॥

वृथा बुझसु संसार विलास। पल पल नाना तरहक त्रास॥

and, then consoled his daughter thus

माय बाप जों सद्गति पाव। सन्ततिकों अनुपम सुख आव॥

(quoted by N. Gupta)

45. See Grierson, *Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*, p. 11.

marks of flood in the river, are still shown to the visitors. The place lies in village Bājitapura in the district of Darbhanga.

His Works

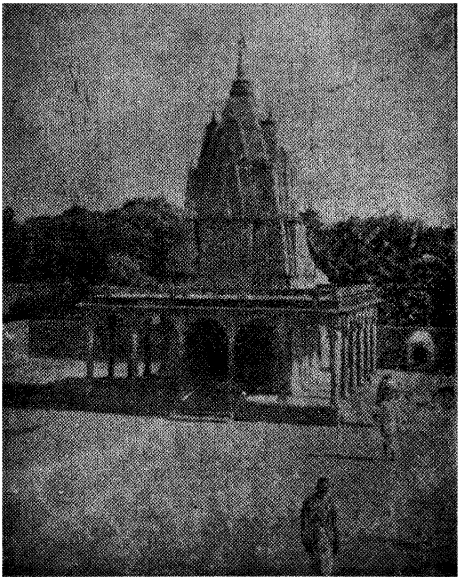
1. *Sanskrit* :

Vidyāpati's works were necessarily conditioned by his connections with the court. He was the court-pandit for generations and had to compile several Nibandhas on topics which were useful for the religious duties of the kings and queens whom he served. He wrote digests on the worship of Śiva (*Saivasarvasvasára*),[46] Gangā[47] (*Gangávákyávalí*) and Durgā[48] (*Durgábhakti-taranginí*); guides to the various Tīrthas (*Bhúparikramá*)[49] and to the various kinds of dānas (*Dánavákyávalí*);[50] and manuals of the rites to be performed on the occasion of Gayā-Śrāddha (*Gayápattalaka*)[51] and of the various customs and ceremonies of a householder throughout the year (*Varsakrtya*).[52] He was also required to prepare a manual of model letters (*Likhanávalí*)[53] for the use of the public to maintain the formal dignity of courtly life. He wrote another work which might help one in judging the character of a man (*Purusa-Paríksá*),[54] obviously to enable the king to know his men in their true colours. Lastly, he was asked to present a considered dissertation on the right ways of partitioning one's inheritance (*Vibhágasára*).[55]

In all these works he showed himself an able and discriminate scholar of the Purāṇas and Smṛtis. They reveal great powers of selecting and marshalling facts. They are not, however, evidences of any exceptional depth of

46-55. Except *Likhanâvalî*, *Durgâbhakti-taranginî*, *Puruṣaparîkṣâ* and *Dânavâkyâvalî*, all are unpublished.

VIDYAPATI-MATHA



The spot where Vidyapati breathed his last
(Bajitpur, Dist. Darbhanga)

Courtsey Babu Narendranatha Das.

Sanskrit learning and mature scholarship in him; indeed, beside his contemporary Maithila Sanskrit writers Vidyāpati is not the most impressive figure. He has no scholarly work to his credit which might compare with those of his contemporaries like Pakṣadhara Mishra, Bāsudeva Mishra, Śaṅkara Mishra and Vardhamāna Upādhyāya, or like Śridatta Mishra, Madhusūdana Mishra, Vācaspati Mishra, Misaru Mishra and Rudradhara Upādhyāya, or like Murāri Mishra and Bhavanātha Mishra, or like Jagaddhara and Rucipati. In such an age, his Sanskrit works are neither very unique nor surprising.

2. *Maithili Avahattha* :

It is, however, as a narrative and as a lyrical poet of Maithili that Vidyāpati stands head and shoulders above his contemporaries. His narrative and descriptive Kāvyas are all in Maithili Avahaṭṭha, but his lyrics are generally in pure Maithili. The Maithili Avhaṭṭha forms a link between modern Vernaculars and the Māgadhi Prākṛta.

The first narrative Kāvya is *Kirttilatá*[56] of about 800 lines. It is divided into four *Pallavas* (=leaves or chapters, cf the title—*latá* creeper). It is mainly in verse (Dohās, Caupāis, Chandas and some obsolete Apabhraṁśa and Prākṛta metres) but it has some prose passages also.

Its theme is an historical event. It relates the regaining of the kingdom of Mithila from the hands of a Muslim usurper Asalāna, by Mahārājakumara Vīrasimha, and Kīrttisimha for whom the work was composed.

56. Edited by MM Haraprasad Śāstri (along with translation into Bengali and English 1924), and by Dr. B. R. Saksena (along with translation into Hindi) 1931. It has been translated into Modern Maithili by Tantranatha Jha (Ms.).

The framework of the work is a dialogue between a Bhṛṅga (bee) and his wife. The first chapter is a panegyric on the ruling monarch Kīrttisiṁha, and it seems that his elder brother had been dead at the time of its writing. In the second chapter, the murder of their father is described and it is pointed out as to how they sought the help of Ibrahim Shah the illustrious Sharqī king of Jaunpur. It provides the poet with an opportunity to attempt vivid and realistic descriptions of the town of Jaunpur. The third chapter gives a graphic account of the Muslim King's expeditions in various other parts of India and portrays the misery of the two princes who passed their days in suspense. It is in the fourth chapter that the final clash between the usurper and the armies of the Ally of the Maithila princes takes place. The event is described in heroic terms and the Maithils regain their kingdom.

There are picturesque and realistic accounts of life in a medieval city and in a medieval army. The poet sketches the gardens, culverts, embankments, ponds, houses and temples. He describes the men and women in the streets and buildings. This is how he presents the spectacle of the market:

"हाट करेओ प्रथम प्रवेश। अष्ट धातु घटना टाङ्कारे कँसेरी पसरा कांस्य केङ्कार। प्रचुर पौरजनपद सम्हार सम्हीन, धनहटा, सोनहटा, पनहटा, पकानहटा, मछहटा, करेओ सुख रव कथा कहन्ते, होइअ झूठ अनि गंभीर गुग्गुरावर्त्त कल्लोल कोलाहल कान भरन्ते, मर्यादा छाड़ि महार्णवउँठ।

"मध्यान्हे करी वेला संमद्द साज, सकल पृथ्वी चक्र करेओ वस्तु विकाएँ आएथाज। मानुसक मीसि पीसि वर आँगे आँगे उँगर आनक तिलक आनकाँ लाग। यात्राहुतह परस्त्रीक वलया भाँग। ब्राह्मणक यज्ञोपवीत चाण्डाल हृदय लूल। वेश्यान्हि करो पयोधर जटीक हृदय चूर। घने सञ्चर घोल हाथि। बहुत वापुर चूरि जाथि आवर्त्त विवर्त्त रोलहो; नगर नहि नरसमुद्र ओ।

बहुले भाँति बणिजार हाट हिण्डए जबे आवथि। सने एके सबे विक्कणथि सबे किछु किनइते पावथि।"[57]

Then follows a marvellous pen-picture of public women in a style which is at once direct and impressive, without much effort at adornment:

"लज्ज कित्तिम कपट तारुन। धन निमित्तें धर पेम, लोमे विनिश्र, सौभागे कामन। विनु स्वामी सिन्दूर, परपरिचय अपामन।"[58]

"तान्हि वेश्यान्हि करो सुख सार मण्डन्ते, अलक तिलका पत्रावली खण्डन्ते, दिब्याम्बर पिन्धन्ते, उभारि उभारि केशपाश वन्धन्ते, सखिजन प्रेरन्ते, हसि हेरन्ते, सम्रानी, लारुमो, पातरी, पतोहरी, तरुणी, तरही, वन्ही, विश्रष्खणी, परिहास पेसणी, सुन्दरी सार्थ, जवे देखिश्र तवे मन कर, तेसरा लागि तीनू उपेक्खिश्र।"[59]

These are fine specimens of Early prose. Unlike the *Varnaratnákara*, here are no catalogues or citations; well marked out sentences and steady progress of ideas is found. Alliteration and the device of jingles, however, persist, but metaphors and similes are almost always bold and expressive. Mr. K. P. Jayaswal says: "Vidyapati's descriptions are without any admixture of the marvellous. It is more a piece of history than a Kavya. By his description he transports his reader to the Sharqui capital in its best days."[60]

He depicts his times truthfully—see, for instance, his description of the Hindus and Muslims living together, one reviling the religion of the other—

57. Dr. Saksena's edition, p. 28-30.

58 Ibid, p. 34.

59. Ibid.

60. JBORS XIII, 3-4, p, 298 review of Śastri's edition of *Kīrttilatā*.

हिन्दू तुरुके मिलल बास, एकक धम्मे अओका उपहास ।
कतहु बाँग कतहु वेद, कतहु बिसिमिल कतहु छेद ।
कतहु ओझा कतहु खोजा, कतहु नकत कतहु रोजा ।
कतहु तम्बारु कतहु कूजा, कतहु निमाज कतहु पूजा ।
कतहु तुरुक बरकाइ, बाट जाइते बेगार धर ।
धरि आनए बाभन बटुआ, मथाँ चढ़ावए गाइक चुड़ुआ ।
फोट चाट जनउ तोड़, उपर चढावए चाह घोड़ ।[61]

This is how he paints Muslims:

अवे बे भखान्ता सराबा पिबन्ता,
कलीमा कहन्ता कलामे जीअन्ता ।
कसीदा कढन्ता मसीदा भरन्ता,
कितेबा पढ़न्ता तुरुक्का अनन्ता ।[62]

The passages which describe battles are similarly full of interest and have very little conventional in them. The following may be quoted as a specimen:

हुङ्कारे बीरा गज्जन्ता, पाइक्का चक्का भज्जन्ता ।
धावते धारा टुट्टन्ता, सन्नाहा बाणे फुट्टन्ता ॥
राउत्ता रोस लग्गीआ, खग्गेही खागा धग्गीआ ।
आरुढा सूरा आवन्ता, ऊँमग्गे मग्गे धावन्ता ॥
एक्क्के एक्के मेढन्ता, परारीच लच्छी मेट्टन्ता ।
अप्पा नामाना सारन्ता, वेलक्के सत्तू मारन्ता ॥
ओ आरे पारे बूझन्ता, कोहाणे बाणे जूझन्ता ।
दुहु दिसँ पाखर ऊँठ, माँझ सँगाम मेढहो ॥
खग्गे खग्गे संघलिअ फुलुग उफ्फलइ अग्गि को ।
अस्सवार असिधार तुरअ राउँत सभो टुट्टइ ॥
वेलक नज्ज निघात काअ कवचहु सभो फुट्टइ ।
अरि कुंजर पंजर सल्लि रह कहिर धारे गये गगण भर ॥
रा(ए) कित्तिसिंह को कज्ज रसेँ बीरसिंह संग्राम कर ॥[63]

61. Dr. Saksena's edition, p. 42, 43.
62. Ibid, p. 40
63. Ibid, p. 104.

The human touches to the account are given at appropriate places, such as when the princes remember their mother, or when they are suffering all sorts of hardships on their way to Jaunpur or when they find it difficult to protect their religious scruples in the Muslim army.

The work is, on the whole, a fine achievement. It has been generally regarded as the first work of a young poet trying to practise writing in the vernacular. The poet was not young—he was about forty—but no other work in the vernacular or Sanskrit can reasonably be ascribed to him before *Kírttilatá*. The poet finds it necessary to write in a language which is easily understood by the people and yet not wholly removed from the common literary medium of the elite. Hence, the *desila baaná* (Maithili) is mixed with the Apabhraṁśa.

The next Avahaṭṭha work of the poet is the poem which purports to describe Śivasingha's coronation:

बिज्जावइ कइवर एहु गावए, मानव मन आनन्द भओ ।
सिंहासण सिवसिंह बइठौ उछवै वैरस बिसरि गओ ॥[64]

The *Kírttipatáka*[65] is the last available Avahaṭṭha work of Vidyāpati. It was discovered along with *Kírttilatá* by MM H. P. Sastri in Nepal and is still unpublished. The Manuscript is older than that of *Kírttilatá* and is dated 426 La. Sam. (=1545 A. D.) but is very corrupt. Pages 8 to 29 are missing. Its excellence is, therefore, difficult to determine; in the extant portions there are very few remarkable lines.

The work begins with Sanskrit benedictory stanzas on Śiva and Gaṇeśa. It is devoted to

64. Khagendranatha Mitra's edition of *Vidyāpati Padāvalī*, p. 340.

65. A copy of it is with me; original in Nepal Durbar Library, and another noticed by Śivanandana Thakura.

the praise of Mahārāja Śivasingha and his amours. Here, the poet makes an important statement which reveals his attitude towards Kṛṣṇa and his sports with Gopīs—

रामेण रामजन्मनि सीताविरहदावानलदग्धमानसेन तत्खेदापनोदाय कृष्णा(sic)वतारेण गोपकुमारेण सानन्द सुन्दरीवृन्दसहस्र-साहित्य-समुपजात-कौतुकेन कदाचि (ल) प्रकुलाना कदाचिच्चटुता कदाचि (द्) दृष्टिमालक्ष्य कृतकामक्रीडाभिलाषि (षि) भिश्चित्त व्रज-सुन्दरीभिः कनककर्णपूत भूश्च (च) रमणीयमाधुर्य्यं मनोहारिभिः विविधभूषणालंचितनानामणिकिसरवै-च्चित्रमनोहारिणीभिः परिणतशरच्चन्द्रमुखीभिः पीनपयोधराक्रान्तगुरुनितम्ब-बिम्बभारोद्वहनपरिश्रममन्दमन्थरगामिनीभिः कदाचित् स्वाधीनभर्तृकाभिः कदा-चिदुत्कण्ठिताभिः कलहान्तरिताभिः कदाचिद्विप्रलब्धाभिः कदाचिद्विरहिणीभिः कदाचिदभिसारिकाभिः कदाचिद्वासकसज्जाभिः कदाचित् (र) खण्डिता (भिः ?, मण्डलानि गृहीत्वा सुमहाभागः रवेजितः ? प्रेरितश्च ॥[68]

This amounts to saying that Rāma took second birth as Kṛṣṇa to enjoy conjugal love of which he was deprived of during his life.

Then follow long amorous passages but they end abruptly in the middle. The next link in the extant Manuscript describes a battle between Śivasingha and some Muslim invaders:

रा अन्हि करे परसे नाथअरे राउतन्हि करे अख व्यापारे हुल्तारहि राउला कुलित हरिणा यूथ न्याय परकठ पपठ बानस्ति रनरहि अपान्कोस ओपाति साहे पतिगाहिअ उभयकटक सम्मिल नमुघोते खण्डे खण्डे खंडे बीरसूरन कारावय एनदूर बारि आवॅ ओ बोंहदर्प्प बड़िम बठावन्ते, खाण्डे कुटि जयधल चऊदन्त विदुन बिन्ते, राअक माथा काण्ड लागुलक शोभाये माननाग नजनि सिंघ कॉके सरजमल सुरतान के बादेल जगत सुप्रसिद्ध भएॅ सए सुरताने जे दन्त बासु हनकोटि समेमारि अत अकवि जे मरिभुवन तेमे पथि आई त खारीतहि कतर बारि धाराधोर नीहेरनो गारिबानि गौरबा प्रेरन्ते पछिआः...... ... . शा॰ आमे सोयं सोला जएक सहुएकहि वैरिखुरे तान के घरहु पुनराध कर सङ्ग्राम जनि दशग्रीव रणपहरे एक स्वरुताते सहु.... .. ..भदिअऊ गौडे सबरु बिनीध.......... ... ...देखु सिव सिंघ दीठी सफतनपाइ ढातनजान-

68. Ms.

न्दोल उपित्तोल पनठ जनि चलवनन्त परवीर सीलक्ज जे वधि समनिम मलिहन्कन्त तलुक चूर्ष ॥

The distinguishing teatures ot the language of Maithili Avahaṭṭha works have been enumerated above[67]; they have many things in common with Early Maithili and with Proto-Maithili (*Caryās*).

3. *Maithili Lyrics*[68] :

The works on which Vidyāpati's glory rests are his Maithili Padas. It is here that his genius found its forte. The range of his songs is amazing. They are, however, mostly love songs; a few are devotional songs and a very few of them deal with miscellaneous subjects. The love songs cover almost all branches of Maithili poetry—'Tirahuti', 'Baṭagamati', 'Māna', 'Goālarī', etc. The devotional songs are mainly concerned with Śakti, Śiva and Gaṅgā. The miscellaneous group includes 'Riddles' and 'Occasional Songs'.

It has been customary to describe the subject-matter of Vidyapāti's love songs under the various aspects of love between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—the Dawn of Youth, the Commencement of Rādhā's love for Kṛṣṇa (and vice versa), Rādhā's beauty, Secret meetings, the Bridal Night, Excuses, Lover's Quarrels and Sports,

67. See above Chapter IV, p. 123; and *Vidyāpati kī Bhāṣā*, pp. 190-208.

68. Two editions of his poems alone need be mentioned here Amulyacarṇa Vidyābhūṣaṇa and Khagendranātha Mitra's (a revised edition of Nagendranatha's important collection of Vidyāpati's poems) published by Sharatkumara Mitra B. L. 85, Grey Street Calcutta, 1348 Sal, 2nd edition, and Śivanandana Thākura's *Viśuddka Vidyāpati Padāvalī* published by Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad, Darbhanga, 1941.

Separation and Re-union. Unlike Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda*, which was before him as a model, the entire collection of Vidyāpati's love songs is not meant to make one connected Kāvya—it is not known if they were ever grouped into such chapters. His songs were written at the moments of inspired experience or to fulfil the demands of the court or of every-day occasional needs, on the model of scores of Sanskrit poets and theorists of poetics and on the matter provided by Paurāṇic poetry. His love songs are, therefore, a mixture of all sorts of occasions and of purposes.

Primarily as a poet of love, he creates visions of the Beautiful. Says MM. H. Sastri:

विद्यापति बहिर्ज्जगतइ इश्राक आर अन्तर्ज्जगतर इश्राक सुन्दर सुन्दर जिनिस बिछिया लइया साजाइबार समय से गुलि के सुन्दरतर सुन्दरतम करिया तुलिया छेन।

He finds glorious sentiments in describing the dawn of Youth in a maiden, the half-concealed and half-revealed emotions of her heart and the final triumph of Youth in fully pervading over her body. On the finished youthful beauty of the beloved he waxes eloquent; he piles metaphor upon metaphor to explain her excessively harmonious limbs, to describe her in various charming poses,[69] to portray her gestures and movements, and to detail out the vibrations of her heart. Though these descriptions are highly sophisticated, one finds them refreshingly limited to the natural and simple life of village folk. In this connection it may be noticed that he rarely connects beauty with

69. Such as, when she has bathed, when she is going on the footpath, when she is crossing the river, when she is on the banks of the river, when she sees her lover, when she is separating from her lover or is love lorn, when she enjoys the company of her lover, when she is angry at her lover, and so on.

rich ornaments or with any other kind of artificial decorations. There is hardly any indication anywhere that he loves elaborate ornamentation and detailed descriptions. Of course, there are repetitions of images and even of descriptions, but they are marked almost always by freshness and directness of appeal to our sense of the Beautiful.

He is equally at home in painting the hero or the heroine in sensuous and receptive moods as well as in angry and annoyed moods. He delights in noting tiny tiffs and lovers' quarrels —borrowing freely from the episode of Kṛṣṇa's sports with his Gopīs, a topic which had been so skilfully exploited by Jayadeva and other Sanskrit poets. There are songs of remorse and longing, of secret meetings, of the pranks near the river banks and elsewhere, of the desertion of Kṛṣṇa to Gokula, of reconciliation and of love-sports of hundreds of kinds. The following is quoted as a popular instance of this aspect of his poems:

कुञ्ज भवनसयँ निकसलि रे, रोकल गिरिधारी ।
एकहि नगर बस माधव हे, जनु कर बटमारी ॥
छाड़ कन्हैया मोर आँचर रे, फाटत नव सारी ।
अपजस होएत नगर भरि हे, जनि करिअ उघारी ॥
संगक सखि अगुआइलि रे, हम एकसरि नारी ।
दामिनि आए तुलाएलि हे, एक राति अँधारी ॥
भनहि विद्यापति गाओल रे, सुनु गुनमति नारी ।
हरिक संग किछु डर नहि हे, तोंह परम गमारी ॥[70]

There are fine pictures of conflict between propriety and enjoyment, and between passionate and pathetic sentiments. There are moments of the highest happiness and also those of intensest sorrow. Both Saṁbhoga and

70. Khagendranatha Mitra edition, p. 44 Pada 126.

Vipralambha Śṛṅgara find full expression; almost all their varieties and aspects have been pointed out. The Viraha (separation) poems attain some of the highest reaches of lyrical poetry. These are poignant lines—

के पतिश्रा लए आएत रे मोरा पियतम पास ।
हिय नहिं सहए असह दुख रे भेल साओन मास ।
एकसरि भवन पिया बिनु रे मोरा रहलो न जाय ।
सखि अनकर दुख दारुन रे जग के पतिआय ॥ Etc.[71]

Specimen of Māna—

मानिनि ! आब उचित नहि मान ।
एखनुक रङ्ग एहन सन लगइछ, जागल पए पँचवान ॥
जूड़ि रयनि चकमक कर चाँदनि, एहन समय नहि आन ॥
एहि अवसर पिय मिलन जेहन सुख, जकरहि होए से जान ॥
रभसि रभसि अलि विलसि विलसि करि करए मधुर मधु पान ॥
अपन अपन पहु सबहु जेमाओल, भूखल तुअ जजमान ॥[72]

and of Disappointment—

कि कहब अगे सखि ! मोर अगेयाने । सगरिओ रयनि गमाओल माने ॥
जखने मोर मन परसन भेला । दारुन अरुण तखने उगि गेला ॥
गुरुजन जागल कि करब केली । तनु झपइत हमे आकुल भेली ॥
अधिक चतुरपने भेलहुँ अयानी । लाभके लोभे मूलहु भेल हानी ॥
भनइ विद्यापति निअ मति दोसे । अवसर काल उचित नहि रोसे ॥[73]

In the numerous vignettes of nature that he offers in the course of his descriptions of the night[74] or of the early morning,[75] or of the

71. Ibid. p. 232 Pada 300.

72. Ibid, p. 134 Pada 408.

73. Ibid, p. 149 Pada 453

74. E.g., रयनि काजर बम भीम भुजंगम Etc Ibid, p 94 Pada 283).

75. E.g., Khagendranatha Mitra Edn., p. 119 (TPLMS) मानिनि अरुण पुरुब दिसा बहलि सगरि निसा Etc. or Ibid, गगन नखत कुल से आवेकत भेल Etc.

spring[76] and the rainy reason,[77] he shows his powers of describing nature in the background of human emotions. Throughout, nature is shown in relation to the diverse moods generated by the season of the year to the love of men and women. It is remarkable that though most of the songs are true to the convention of Sanskrit Poetics and to the Science of Love, they are everywhere recorded with the force and sincerity born of actual experience of the author.

The devotional poems to the credit of the poet are small in number. In one of these he regrets that he passed his life in singing of earthly joys and that he has come to the conclusion that blessings of Mādhava were the only hope now;[78] in another he sings of the transience of youth which he served all his life.[79] He

76 E.g., Ibid, p. 201
माघ मास सिरि पंचमी गुजरिलि Etc

77. Ibid. p. 94 रयनि काजर बम भीम भुजगम etc.; Or,

काजरे साजलि राति, घन भए बरिसए जलधर पॉति ।
बरिस पयोधर धार, दूर पथ गमन कठिन अभिसार ॥
जमुन भयाउनि नार, आरति बसति पाउति नहि तीर ॥
झिंगुरी तुरंग डराइ, तों भल कर जों पलटि घर जाइ ॥
झॉखथि देव बनमाली, एहि निधि कोने परि आउति गोयाली ॥
भनइ विद्यापति बानी, तोहहु तइ कान्ह नारि सयानी ॥

78 Khagendranatha Edn., p. 279.

माघव हम परिणाम निराशा ।
तुहु जगतारन दीन दयामय अतए तोहर विसवासा ॥
आध जनम हम नींद गमावल जरा सिसु कत दिन गेला ।
निधुवन रयनि रभस रंग मातनु तोहे भजब कओन बेला ॥

Also see, p. 524 Pada 964 चित गेला तिन पन करइत आन Etc.

79. Ibid, p. 280.

बएस कतए तेजि गेला । तोंह सेवइते जनम बहला ॥
तहआओ अपन मेला । सैसव दशा चाहि लोअओला है ॥ Etc.

writes in praise of Kṛṣṇa,[80] Śiva[81] (and Gangā)[82] and Śakti[83] The most important of these are his Maheśavāṇes and Nacārīs. These poems are traditionally his most devotional works. He regards Hara as equal to Mādhava,[84] sings of His form (in excellent humour)[85] and places his all at His feet.[86] The Maheśavāṇis are addressed to the mother of Gaurī, known as Menakā (Manāini), and profess to describe the life of Hara as that of a common poor householder of Mithilā.[87] Śiva is said to have been pleased by his hymns and to have served him as his servant, Uganā.[88]

The Poetry of Vidyapati

"There is no longer any need to stress the point that Vidyāpati's love poetry is not in the spirit of Bengalī Vaiṣṇavism. Mm. Haraprasad Śāstri has made it very clear that his love-lyrics are not 'Bhajans'.[89] They are like the

80. E.g., Ibid, p. 281 माधव कत तोर करब बड़ाई etc.

81. E g. Ibid, p. 3‹9 Pada 916 जय जय सङ्कर जय त्रिपुरारि etc.

82. E.g., Ibid, p 329 Pada 976 बड़ सुख सार पाओल तुअ तीरे etc.

83. E.g., Ibid, p. 1, Pada 1 जय जय भैरवि असुर भयाउनि etc.

84. E.g., Ibid, p. 309 Pada 915.

85. E.g., Ibid, p. 313 Pada 927.

86. E g., Ibid. p. 325 Pada 966.

87. E.g., See Narendranāthadāsa, *Vidyâpati Kâvyâloka*, p 29.

88. E.g., Khagendranatha Mitra, p. 315. When Ugana disappeared because Vidyāpati disclosed to his wife his identity, the poet sang this poem : उगना हे मोर कतय गेला ! etc.

89. Grierson called them 'Bhajans'. See Ramanatha Jha "की विद्यापति वैष्णव छलाह ?" in *Maithilī Gadyasangrah* Ma. S, Parisad, Darbhanga ; Dr Umesha Mishra, *Vidyâpati Thakura* (Vidyapati-ka Sampradāya); Dr. B. R. Saksena (Introduction to his edition of *Kīrttilatâ*) and MM

Gitagovinda in this respect: "There is nothing, we must admit, of the divine in Kṛṣṇa, save an occasional reminder that he is the Almighty, one who removes the sorrows of the world, and it is an idle fancy which sees in the sports of the God with the maidens the entry of the soul into the confusion and incoherence of the manifold, whence he emerges to the love of Rādhā, the bliss of Absolute Unity". To Vidyāpati also like Jayadeva the sports of Kṛṣṇa provided

Haraprasad Śāstri (Introduction to his edition of *Kīrtti-latā*) MM Śāstri says:

१. सहजियारा ये बलिया थाके विद्यापति रसिक भक्त छिलेन, लछिमा देवी ताँहार प्रेमपात्री, ए कथा एकवारेइ विश्वास योग्य नाहे। कारण विद्यापति शुद्ध लछिमा देवी ओ शिवसिंहेरइ कर्म्मचारी बलिया ये केवल ताहादेरइ नामे भनिता दियाछेन, एमन नइ, तिनि हुसेन शाहशाहेर, नसरत शाह, आलमसाहेर नामेओ भनिता दियाछेन। सुतरा भनिताय रानीदेर नाम देखिया विद्यापति के सहजिया चाइ...युक्तियुक्त नय।

२. यखन पंडित हइया लिखिते छेन तखन कृष्णेर नामओ करेन नाइ।

३. एखनओ आमादेर देशे देखा याय आदिरसेर गान लिखिते गेलेइ लोक राधाकृष्णर नाम करे।

४. विद्यापतिर समय सेटा (कीर्तन-पद्धति) छिल की? विद्यापतिर अन्ततः दुइ शतवत्सर परे रस शास्त्रेर बहु प्रचार हय। सुतरां, तिनि कीर्त्तनेइ गान लिखिया छेन एवं रसशास्त्रेर छाँचे ताहा चालिया छेन ए कथा आमरा निश्चय करिते पारि ना।

५. तिनि छिलेन राजकवि, राजपारिषद्। राजारा वा राजसभासदेरा येमन फरमाइस करितेन तिनि तेमनइ गान लिखितेन एवं ताँहादेर मनोरञ्जन करिबार जन्य ताहाँदेर एवं ताहादेर परिवारेर नाम सेइ सङ्गे जुड़िया दितेन। राजसभार खुब एकटा आमोद हइत। अनेक समयइ ताँहाके फरमाइस कर्त्ताके श्याम साजाइते हइत एवं ताँहार सोहागिनी के राधा साजाइते हइत। ताइ करियाइ विद्यापतिर ऐत आदिरसेर गान सृष्टि हइयाछे। तिनि कीर्त्तन लिखितेओ वसेन नाइ, राधाकृष्णेर प्रेम लइया वइ लिखितेओ वसेन नाइ। गानगुलि भिन्न-भिन्न समये भिन्न भिन्न स्थाने, भिन्न भिन्न लोकेर फरमाइस मत लेखा हइया छिल।

an opportunity "to transfer all the arts of love which the Kāmasūtra (and Sāhitya-Śāstra) lays down".[90] This is why perhaps Vidyāpati was called "Abhinava Jayadeva" (new Jayadeva) and this is also why we find so many allusions and parallels to Sanskrit poems in his love lyrics.[91] It appears that the erotic mysticism of these poets influenced similar tendencies in Caitanyaism, but as Dr. S K. De says,[92] it would not be historically correct to read later Vaiṣṇava Rasa Śāstra into them.

In this connection it is worth noting that though we have evidence to show that Vidyāpati knew a great deal of the *Bhágavata Purána*, yet it is strange that his treatment of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa episode differs so fundamentally from it. The *Bhágavata* avoids all direct mention of Rādhā as Kṛṣṇa's consort and speaks of autumnal (and not vernal) Rāsa-līlā,[93] but Vidyāpati,

८. आमरा वेश करिथा पिजिथा पिजिया देखियाछि ये विद्यापतिर अनेक गाने राधाकृष्णेर नामओ नाइ गन्धओ नाइ; अथ च नगेन्द्र बाबू सेगुलि के ओ कीर्त्तनेर छाँचे ढाला रसप्रवाहेर मध्ये वसाइया दियाछेन। He ends "विद्यापति कीर्त्तनेर गान लिखेन नाइ। ताँहार दु'दशटी गान लइया कीर्त्तनीयारा ताहादेर कीर्त्तने योग करिया छे मात्र। विद्यापति वैष्णव छिलेन ना। तिनि पञ्चोपासक छिलेन, विष्णुर उपासनाय ताँहार किछुइ आपत्ति छिल ना। तिनि शिव गंगाय जन्य येमन गान लिखिया छेन कृष्णेर जन्यओ तेमने लिखिया छेन। विशेष वैष्णव भाव ताँहाते नाइ बलिलेओ हय। तिनि सौन्दर्य्येर कवि छिलेन, सौन्दर्य्येर सृष्टि करिया गियाछेन। आदिरस सौन्दर्य्येर खनि तिनि बहुसंख्यक आदिरसेर गान लिखिया गिया छेन। आदिरसेर मध्य कृष्णराधार प्रेम खूब बड़जिनिस, तिनि ताहार यथेष्ठ व्यवहार करिया छेन। अनेक बारे कृष्ण राधा उपलक्ष्य मात्र आदिरस प्रधान लक्ष्य।

90. Kieth—*Classical Literature* (Heritage of India Series), p. 122.

91. See, f. n. below 98.

92. *Vaiṣṇava Faith and Movement*, pp. 7-10, also p. 1 f. n. 1; p. 5 ff.. and p. 412.

93. Ibid.

predominantly sings of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa as consorts. This is also the case with Jayadeva and may ultimately be traced back to the *Brahma-Vaivarta-Purána* which presents Rādhā in a vivid background of great sensuous charm and is singular in effecting a regular marriage between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and thereby discountenancing the Parakīyābhāva.[94] Of course, Vidyāpati's immediate source must have been Jayadeva; yet, we cannot absolutely rule out the possibility of his having access to *Brahma-Vaivarta* before(?) he read the *Bhágavata*—the *Brahama-Vaivarta* being one of the most important Purāṇas current in Mithila, nay it is held that it was written finally in Mithila or at least in Eastern India.

The atmosphere in which Vidyāpati wrote these poems was that of a court; this is the reason why we have an abundance of images from the court-life.[95] He talks of wealth, of the miser and of the businessman. He writes to please his patrons—including Muslims. He follows stock and familiar conventions and sophisticated language and style for the approval and delight of the learned courtiers. He is very rarely free from this atmosphere—his "riddles" and "occasional songs" may as well owe their origin to this fact as to the social needs of the people in general.

Nevertheless, he widely exploits life outside the court as well. He marks several things of everyday life in his numerous proverbs and *arthántaranyásas*[96]; see for example:

(i) आगि बारिअ पुनु आगिहिक काजे।

94. Ibid.

95. Cf. the description of the Dawn of Youth in Khagendranātha Mitra, p. 17, Padá 50; and that of spring in several Padas, e.g., Ibid p. 202 Pada 610.

96. A collection of them has been made by Dr, Umesha Mishra in his *Vidyāpati Thākura*,

(*ii*) केहन सिय हो तेहन सिनेह।

(*iii*) पर घनें मौंग भेजाब।

(*iv*) पुरुषक कपटी प्रीति।

(*v*) सकल समय नहिं रीतु बसंत।

(*vi*) छोट पानि चहचह कर पोठी के नहिं बान। etc.,

He writes several poems for the common folk; he provides songs for almost all occasions in Maithila life, such as, his songs of Gosāuni, Jogs, Uciti, Maheśavānis etc. The songs of Śiva depict the life of the common folk and provides ample room for the poet's realistic imagination. He writes of the evils of child-marriage and sketches the life of the old and the poor.[97]

There are two classes of poems which seem to have been written by the poet for his own satisfaction. The first includes such love poems as are not addressed to any patron. The second is made up of his Nacāris which, when all is said and done, remain to be his highest devotional works. These songs have remarkable spontaneity, unique simplicity and extreme directness of expression. It is possible that some of these songs were composed in the earlier part of his life, but a majority of them belong to a later period.

The influence of Sanskrit is great on his poetry. Mm. Haraprasad Sastri rightly says:

"संस्कृत अलङ्कारे यत किछु कवि प्रौढोक्ति आछे, यत चलित उपमा आछे, विद्यापति ठाकुर ताँहार गानगुलिते सेगुलिर प्रचुर व्यवहार करियाछेन। हालासप्तशती, आर्यासप्तशती अमरुशतक, शृङ्गारशतक प्रभृति संस्कृत एवं प्राकृत आदिरसेर कविता गुच्छ हइते विद्यापति आपनार गानेर यथेष्ट भाव संग्रह करियाछेन। अनेक समय पड़िते पड़िते सुपरिचित संस्कृत श्लोक मने पड़े। अनेक समय बोध हय, एइ सकल संस्कृत कवितार उपर विद्यापति रङ चढ़ाइया. छेन। ताँहादेर भाव लइया वेशी करिया फुटाइयाछेन। समय समय श्लोके-

97. Cf. Note 87 above.

केर रूपवर्णना करिते गिया कोन अंगेरइ नाम करेन नाइ, किन्तु अङ्गगुलिके उपमानगुलिके एमन करिया साजाइया छेन, ये ये संस्कृत न पड़ियाछे से ताहार रससंग्रह करिते पारिबे ना। पाषितेओ अनेक भ्रष्टे करितेछे हइब।"[98]

Indeed the learned Mahāmahopādhyāya goes on to charge the poet with the lack of originality in his imagery:

"सुतरां याहारा संस्कृत पड़ियाछेन ताँहादेर पक्षे इहार आर भाषा छोड़ा नूतन जिनिस किछुओ नाइ। केवल सेइ संस्कृत कवितार स्मृति जागाइया दियाइ गान थामिया याय।"[99]

His imagery (metaphors, similes and epithets) is very much guided by the conventions of Sanskrit. The commonest comparisons are with: Cakora, bee, lotus, lion, gold, antelope, ponengrade, nectar (Amṛta), arrow, Rāhu, moon, Khañjana, lightning, trunk of plantain-tree, Śriphala, Malaya or right wind, Bimba, Pravāla, hill and the like. This was but a natural influence of the kind of work put together by his predecessor Jyotirīśvara. He manipulates his metaphors very cleverly and often succeeds in playing upon the conventional metaphors and epithets most dexterously.[100] He is a master of similes, both long and short[101]—not necessarily all within conventional orbits.

98. Introduction to *Kīrttilatā*. Shivanandana Thakura (*Mahākavi Vidyāpati*, with Jayadeva, pp. 110-114, with Amaru, pp. 114-123, with Govardhana, pp. 124.129 with Bhāravi and Māgha. pp. 124-129) and Narendranathadasa (*Vidyāpati Kāvyāloka*, pp. 15 to 60) have worked out how his numerous poems echoe Sanskrit writers and how in many cases he has gone beyond them.

99. Ibid.

100. E.g., Khagengranatha Mitra, p. 11 Pada 29, or the pada—सखा पद अमर तापर गिरि ताहि मैं Etc.

101. Successful instances are to be found when he sings of the marriage of Vasanta (Ibid p. 204), or when he compares conjugal union to worshipping (N. G. Indian

Some of the images reveal the harshness of man's handling of woman.[102] They are also determined by their sounds.

In short, he is as great a careful craftsman as he is a poet of emotions and ideas. "The vocabulary and language of Vidyapati's poetry is comparitively pure but as might be expected, archaic and frequently obscure and most difficult."[103] But, like the greatest poets of the world, he gives some of his most poignant and deepest feelings in simple language unadorned with any figure of speech. For example, the poems which begin with the following lines are specimens of his highest poetry:

(1) कइ सुख सावे पाओल तुअ तीरे ।[104]

(2) कखन हरब दुख मोर हे भोलानाथ ।[105]

(3) सुतलि छलहुँ हम घरवा रे गरवा मोतिहार ।[106]

(4) सखि हे हमर दुखक नहि ओर ।[107]

His supreme glory as a poet, then, lies in the gift of his extraordinary sensibility and of his power to express it in musical and artistic language. His great achievement, like that of Kālidāsa and Tagore, has been to take

Press Edn. p. 409); or when he compares a woman to Śiva (Kh. Mitra Pada........................), or when a necklace is compared to the current of river Gaṅgā (Ibid Pada .. ..); or when Viparīta-Rati is pictured as the coming of Pralaya (Narendranatha Dsas. *Vidyâpati Kâvyâloka*, p. 241) or as Saṅgīta (N. G. Indian Press Edn. Pada 611), etc.

102. E.g. those where the lover is compared to Rahu, or to elephant or to lion or to hunter and the beloved to moon or to lotus leaf or to deer or to bird respectively.

103 *Bengali Literature* by Lila Ray (published by the P. E. N. Indian Centre, Bombay).

104. Khagendranatha Mitra *op. cit.*, p. 329.

105. Ibid, p. 326.

106. Ibid, p. 267.

107. Ibid, p. 235.

every poetic element and subdue it to a harmony of artistic perfection set in the key of sensuous beauty. He could visualise and present strongest feelings for all sensuous beauty of colour and form. He laid the foundations of Maithili literature deeply and permanently; he was so successful that for a number of years the ability to imitate his lines alone was considered a poetic gift.

III

THE INFLUENCE OF VIDYAPATI THAKURA

In Mithila

It is wholly wrong to think that Vidyāpati was ignored or not appreciated in his own province till others pointed out his greatness. Of course, researches on Vidyāpati on modern critical lines started very late in Mithila. This was but natural because "English" education was introduced there very late.

In his own days, Vidyāpati was fortunate in having a very eager and responsive audience at the court. His patrons were very sympathetic to him. To Mahārāja Kīrttisiṅgha he was "the Playmate Poet", to Mahārāja Śivasingha and his queen Mahādevī Lakhimā he was the "New Jayadeva" whom they rewarded with the gift of his native village Bisphī, to his contemporaries he was "Sukavi", "Sarasakavi", "Sukavi-Kaṇṭhahāra" and to the public at large he was the supreme singer of Vyāvahārika (occasional) songs and devotional hymns to Śiva and Śakti. Indeed, the *Āin-i-Akbarī* (c. 1598) notices in its section on music the glory of the "Lacharis of Bidyāpat".

From what Locana says in the *Rāga-taraṅginī* about the achievement of Vidyāpati

as a musician, it appears that a special line of singers was founded. Jayata was appointed by Mahārāja Śivasingha to sing his songs in their proper melodies. His son Vitṛṣṇa, grandson Harihara Mallika, and great-grand-son Ghanaśyāma Mallika carried on the tradition. At the time of Locana, there were three sons of Ghanaśyāma Mallika who were the exponents of Vidyāpati Music. Locana himself was a great admirer of Vidyāpati.

Besides this, a long line of imitators succeeded him till the beginning of the present century. A remarkable feature of these poets of the Vidyāpati tradition is their names, ending in "Pati", e.g., Umāpati, Nandīpati, Ramāpati, Kṛṣṇapati, Kulapati, Śrīpati, Harapati, Mahīpati and Lakṣmīpati. Each of these poets followed the imagery, technique and prosody of the Master. In the 'Bhanitā' these poets insert the name of the patron for whose pleasure or under whose orders they wanted to be known to have written their poems

Of these poets, Govindadāsa alone refers to Vidyāyati explicitly as his guru.[108]

In the Neighbouring Provinces

(1) *Bengal*

The fame of Vidyāpati in the neighbouring provinces was equally great, if not greater. In his own province he became famous as a poet of love and as a devotee of Śiva. In the provinces of Bengal, Orissa and Assam he was known as a great Vaiṣṇava. He was the earliest singer of Eastern India who had raised

108. See *Govinda Gītāvalī* edited by Mathura Prasad Dikshit, Pustaka-Bhandar, Laheriasarai, p. 3; and Nagendranatha Gupta, *Vidyāpati Padāvalī*. Vasumati Edition, p. 1.

a vernacular to the level of a literary language; his poems were written and cultivated in a land which was the leader of Sanskrit Learning and Hindu Culture, where people from all parts of the country came to qualify themselves as scholars; he was somehow instrumental in popularising the cult of Kṛṣṇa-Rādhā worship begun in a peculiarly sensual phraseology by the Purāṇas and developed into one of the highest literary achievements in Sanskrit by Jayadeva—all this in the background of Musalamān inroads; and, last but not the least, the native sweetness and excellence of his songs written in a language which did not seem to be very much removed from their own vernaculars of those days—these led to the enormous vogue of Vidyāpati in the neighbouring provinces.

Vidyāpati's songs acquired an added meaning when Caṇḍīdāsa's and Vidyāpati's name were coupled together.[109] It has been, however shown by scholars like Romesh Chandra Dutt that there is no likelihood of the two having ever met each other and that Caṇḍīdāsa's poetry was later and was inspired by Vidyāpati,[110] especially in the *Kṛṣṇakīrttana*.

A still more important thing happened. His songs became great favourites of the famous Vaiṣṇava reformer of Bengal, Caitanya, and through him, songs purporting to be by Vidyāpati became as well-known in Bengali households as the Bible is in English ones. Says Grierson:

> "And now a curious circumstance arose, unparalleled I believe in the history of literature....(His songs) were twisted and contorted, lengthened and curtailed, in the procrustean bed of the Bangali

109. See the discussion in *Vidyāpati Kāvyāloka*, p. 64 ff.

110. *Bengali Literature*, p. 15.

language and metre, into a kind of bastard language neither Bangālī nor Maithili, but this was not all,—a host of imitators sprung up,—notably one Basant Rāy of Jessore, who wrote, under the name of Vidyāpati in this bastard language, songs which in their form bore a considerable resemblance to the matter of our poet, but which almost entirely wanted the polish and felicity of expression of the old master-singer... .... (These imitation songs known as "Brajabūlī" songs) became gradually more popular amongst the Bangālī people than the real songs of Vidyāpati . ..."[111]

A complete account of these "Brajabulī" poets has been given by Dr. Sukumar Sen in his *History of Brajabúlí Literature.*[112] The extant poems are found in the following collections "Kṣaṇada-gīta-cintāmaṇi" (c. 1700), "Padāmṛta-Samudra" (c. 1725) "Pada-Kalpataru" (c. 1750), Sānkīrttanāmṛta (c. 1771), "Padarasasāra" (c. 1925), "Pada-Ratnākara" (Ms of 1653) "Pada-kalcalatikā" (1849), "Gangā-pada-tarangiṇī" (1903), "Aprakaśita-Pada-Ratnāvalī" (supplement to "Pada-Kalpataru") and stray poems in *Vanga-Sáhitya-Pariṣad-Patriká* and anthologies of Vaiṣṇava Poetics, such as, "Rasakalpa-Vallī," "Rasa-Mañjarī," "Bhakti-Ratnākara," and "Nāyikā-Ratna-Mālā."

Dr. Subhadra Jha has analysed these songs and grouped them into four classes:[113]

(*a*) Some whose language is pure Maithili.

(*b*) Some which are in Maithili mixed up with Bengalī.

(*c*) Some in pure Bengalī.

(*d*) Some in Bengalī with words belonging to Hindī (Braja-bhāṣā)-

The limited space at our disposal forbids us from giving any descriptin of the Brajabulī

111. Grierson, *Maithili Chestomathy*, p. 34.
112. Published by the Calcutta University, Calcutta.
113. OCP XII Part I Summaries, 1943, p. 190.

poets in detail. We can, however, examine a few leading figures,

Jñānadāsa (born c. 1530) wrote nearly 105 poems in Brajabulī and is one of its most careful writers. His language is marked with elegance of style and diction. The following poem is quoted as a specimen. On finding out the secret love of Rādhā, one of her friends speaks to her thus :

लहु लहु मुचकि हासि चलि आओलि
पुन पुन हेरसि फेरि
रतिपति सओ मिलन—रंगभूमे
ऐञ्छन कएल पुछेरि ॥
धनि हे बुझलौं ए सब बात
एतदिन तोहुँक मनोरथ पुरल
भेटलि कानूक साथ ॥
जब तोहे बसीवाथ निर्जन पुछल
तब तुहुँ झापलि काय
अब विहि सो-सब वेकत कएल सखि
कैछने गोपावि ताय ॥
चोरिक वचन कहत सब गुरुजन
सो सब पायलौं सखि ।
दस दिन दुर्जन एकदिन सुजनक
आजु देखलौं परतेखि ॥
हम सब निजजन कहबि राति दिन
सो सब बुझलौं आब काजे
"ज्ञानदास" कह साखी तहुँ विरमह
राए पायल बहु लाजे ॥[114]

Govindadāsa is the name of at least three Brajabulī poets. One of them is the great poet who has made this name immortal in Maithili literature.[115] The other Govindadāsas are

114. Sukumar Sen, *History of Brajabuli*, p. 68.

115. See Chapter VI of the present work.

(1) Govindadāsa Kavirāja (? 1535 - ? 1613), (2) Govindadāsa Cakravarti (contemporary of (1)), (3) Govindadāsa Ācārya (c. 1533). Poems ascribed to the first Govindadāsa belong to the great Maithila Govindadāsa. This is why Dr. Sukumar Sen has to say:

> "None of the poems which Radhamohana (the greatest compiler of Vaiṣṇava lyrics) ascribes to the Kavirāja are written in Bengali, from which it might be concluded that the poet did not write any poem in Bengali."[116]

In the absence of Bengali poems, it is no use simply to assert that "this conclusion seems...absurd, that a great Bengali poet should not write in Bengali."[117]

For, this Govindadāsa was not a Bengali at all. We shall deal with his 'Brajabulī' poems under Maithila Govindadāsa (c. 1670).

Among other important Brajabūlī poets in Bengal, Balarāmadāsa occupies a very great position. His correct identification has not been possible. As with Jñānadāsa, his Brajabūlī poems (about 80 in number) are decidedly inferior to his Bengali poems. Like Govindadāsa he was a skilled metrician, and could write ornamental poetry (e.g. see his alliterative poems beginning with letters *ba*, *ca* and *ka*). As regards the passions and pains of a lover, according to Dr. Sen, he excels all other Bengali Brajabulī poets, even though this was the special field of all the Vaiṣṇava poets. Of all great Bengali Brajabulī poets, he is the only poet who has made a considerable achievement in depicting the mother's love of yearning for her child (Vātsalya rasa). See, for example, the following poem. Yaśodā is saying to the companions of Kṛṣṇa:

116. *History of Brajabūlī Literature*, p. 108.
117. Ibid, p. 108.

श्रीदाम सुदाम दाम शुन, ओरे, बलराम
मिनती करियें तो सभारे।
वन कत अतिदूरे नवतृण कुशाङ्कुर
गोपाल लैय ना याहि दूरे॥
सखागण आगे पाछे गोपाल करिया माझे
धीरे धीरे करिह गमन।
नव तृणाङ्कुर आगे राङ्गा पाये जानि लागे
प्रबोध ना माने मोर मन॥
निकटे गोधन राखब मा बल्या शिङ्गाय डाकब
धरे थाकि सुनि येनस।
विहि कैले गोपजाति गोधन पालन वृत्ति
तेजि वनें पाठाइ यादव॥
"बलरामदासेर" वाणी सुन ओगो नन्दरानी
मने किछु ना भाविह भय।
चरणेर बाधा लैया दिव मोरा जोगैया
तोमार आगे कहिल निश्चय॥[118]

Of Narottamadāsa (c. 1583) we know a lot. His Radhā-Kṛṣṇa poems are mediocre but those dealing with 'prārthanā' are by common consent his greatest works. And though Brajabuli forms are copiously found in his Bengali writings, there are only one or two 'prārthanās' in pure Brajabuli. No particular flight of fancy, no brilliancy (intellectual or philosophical) of style or language marks his poems but there is such a blending of yearning and pathos, personal appeal and direct simplicity as cannot but move the reader. The following poem is quoted as a specimen:

हे गोविन्द गोपीनाथ कृपाकरि राख निजपथे,
काम क्रोध छअो जन लैया फिरे,
नाना स्थाने विषय भुञ्जाय नाना मते॥
हैया मायार दास करि नाना अभिलाष
तोमार स्मरण गेल दूरे।

118. Ibid, p. 30,

अर्धलाज, एहि अबहो कपट हेरइ केरो
भ्रमियो · दुलिये चरे चरे ॥ etc.[119]

Among the "successors of Govindadasa Kaviraja", Rāyśekhara seems to be the most important. Specimens of his style are given below :

(1) काजर-रुचि-हर रयनि बिशाला।
तछु पर अभिसार कर व्रजबाला॥
घर सञो निकसय येछन चोर।
निश्शब्द पथ गति चलतिह थोर॥
उन्मत्त चित्त अति आरति बिथार।
गुरुया नितम्ब नवयौवन भार॥ etc.[120]

(2) A slavish imitation of the great Maithila Govindadasa :

कुन्दन-कनक-कमल-रुचि निन्दित
सुरधुनि-तीर बिहारी।
कुञ्चित कण्ठ-कलित कुसुमाकुल
कुन्तल कामनि मनोहारि। etc.[121]

I may now refer to the modern revival of Brajabuli in Bengal. Of course, this does not imply any break in the history of Brajabuli; it was cultivated throughout the centuries. Janamejaya Mitra (father of Rajendra Lal Mitra), Bankima Chandra Chatterji (1838-1894), Rajakrsna Raya (1855-1893), and lastly, the greatest of these, Rabindranatha Tagore (1851-1941) may be mentioned among those who have written in it in the recent past. I shall deal with Rabindranatha only.

"His (Vidyapati's) poems and songs were one of the earliest delights that stirred my youthful imagination and I even had the

119. Ibid, p. 98.
120. Ibid, p. 149.
121. Ibid, p. 148.

privilege of setting one of them to music",[122] so he wrote in 1937 to Babu Narendra Nath Das Vidyalankara. Pandit Mathuraprasada Dikṣita quotes[123] the following extracts from an article of Mr. Nagendra Nath Gupta in the *Indian Nation* (Tagore Septuagenary supplement) Sunday, December 20, 1931, entitled *Maithili Poets and Rabindranāth Tagore*:

> "by studying the poems of the Maithil poets, he acquired a wonderful command over the Maithili language. He was in his teens when under the Pseudonym of Bhanu-singh (Bhanu being a synonym for Ravi—the sun) he wrote a number of lyrics in the Maithili language...Rabindra Nātha would be the first to acknowledge the debt that he owes to the great Maithil poets—Vidyāpati and Govinda Dās......But it is their light that has illuminated the genius of Rabindra Nath Tagore and brought an admiring world around him."

The *Bhānu-simha-Thākurera Padāvalī* appeared in 1921.[124] The poet deals with the

122. Letter to Narendranathadasa quoted in *Vidyāpati Kāvyāloka*.

123. Introduction to his edition of *Govinda-Gītāvalī*, Pustaka-Bhandara, Laheriaserai.

124. He describes the full history of publishing this in his *My Reminiscenes* (p. 136 ff): "As I have said I was a keen student of the series of old Vaishnava poems which were being collected and published by Babu Akshaya Sarkar and Saroda Mitter. Their language largely mixed with Maithili, I found difficult to understand; but for that very reason I took all the more pains to get at their meaning. My feeling towards them was that of some eager curiosity with which I regarded the ungerminated sprout within the seed, or the undiscovered mystery under the dust-covering of the earth. My enthusiasm was kept up with the hope of bringing to light some unknown poetical gems, as I went deeper and deeper into the unexplored darkness of this treasure-house.

While I was so engaged, the idea got hold of me of enfolding my own writings in just such a wrapping of mystery. I had heard from Akshaya Chowdhry the story of the English boy-poet Chatterton. What his poetry was like I had no idea, nor perhaps had Akshaya Babu

R dhā-Kṛṣṇa theme without any vestige of religious thought. Its language is Maithili, with

himself. Had we known, the story might have lost its charm. As it happened the melodramatic element in it fired my imagination; for had not so many been deceived by his beautiful imitation of the classics? And at last the unfortunate youth had died by his own hand. Leaving aside the suicide part, I girded up my loims to emulate young Chatterton's exploits.

One noon the clouds had gathered thickly. Rejoicing in the grateful shade of the cloudy mid-day rest-house, I lay prône on the bed in my inner room. I wrote on a slate the imitation Maithili poem.

I was greatly pleased with it, and lost no time in reading it out to the first man I came across, of whose understanding a word of it happened to be not the slightest danger and who consequently could not but gravely nod and say, "Good, very good indeed".

To my friend mentioned a while ago I said one day: "A tattered old manuscript has been discovered while rummaging in the Adi Brahma Samaja Library, and from this I hade copied some poems by an old Vaishnava poet named Bhanu Singha." With him I read some of my imitation poems to him. He was profoundly stirred. "These could not have been written even by Vidyapati or Chandidasa" he rapturously exclaimed. "I really must have that manuscript made over to Akshaya Babu for publication."

Then I showed him my manuscript book and conclusively proved that the poem could not have been written by either Vidyapati or Chandidasa because the author happened to be myself. My friend's face fell as he muttered, "Yes, yes, they are not half bad."

When these Bhanu Singha poems were coming out in the *Bharati*, Dr. Nishikanta Chatterjee was in Germany. He wrote a thesis on the lyric poetry of our country comparing it with that of Europe. Bhanu Singha was given a place of honour as one of the old poets, and as no modern writer could have aspired to. This was the thesis on which Nishikanta Chatterjee got his Ph.D.

Whoever Bhanu Singha might have been, had his writings fallen into the hands of latter day men, I swear I would not have been deceived. The language might have passed muster, for that which the old poets wrote in was not their mother tongue but an artificial language

few sporadic Bengali forms as usual. The poems number twenty only. They are on Vasanta-Vāsanā, Śūnya-Kānana, Viphala-Rajani, Viraha-Vedanā, Milana-Sajjā, Milana, Vaṁśi-Dhvani, Abhisāra, Pratīkṣā, Vyākulatā, Rasāveśa, Nidrā, Varṣā, Anutaptā, Vidā, Dūtıra Prati, Samsyā, Maraṇa, and Ko Tuhu.

The following poem is quoted as a specimen :

गहन कुसुम कुञ्ज माझे
मृदुल मधुर बंशी बाजे
विसरि त्रास लोक लाजे
सजनि आओ आओ लो ॥

अंगे चारु नीलवास
हृदय प्रणय-कुसुमरास
हरिण नेत्र विमल हास
कुञ्ज वन में आओ लो ॥

ढाले (रे) कुसुम सुरभिभार
ढाले (रे) विहग सुखसार
ढाले (रे) इन्दु अमृतधार
विमल रजत भाति रे ॥

मन्द मन्द भ्रमर गुञ्जे
अयुत कुसुम कुञ्ज कुञ्जे
फुटल सजनि पुञ्जे पुञ्जे
बकुल यूथि जाति रे ॥

देख सजनि श्यामराय
नयन प्रेम उठल जाय
मधुर वदन अमृत सदन
चन्द्रमाय निन्दि छे ॥

varying in the hands of different authors......Any attempt to test Bhanu Singha's poems would have shown up the base metal. It had none of the ravishing melody of our ancient pipes, but only the trickle of a modern foreign barrel organ."

आओ आओ व्रजनिकुञ्ज
हेरब बलि श्री गोविन्द
श्याम को पदारविन्द
भानु सिंह बन्दि के ॥[125]

Vidyāpati's fame in Bengal, therefore, rested on two scores; first, that he was probably an Old 'Bengāli Classic', and second, that he was a great 'Vaiṣṇava singer'. Bankim and Tagore respected him in the first manner; Caitanya and subsequent Vaiṣṇavas in the second.

(2) *Assam*

In the province of Assam, Vidyāpati became popular mainly as a Vaiṣṇava singer. In a tour Śaṅkara Deva (1449-1568) the great Vaiṣṇava reformer of Assam saw the great instrument that the Brajabūlī or Maithilī language had been in spreading Vaiṣṇavism, and introduced it in Assam.

It is not wholly true to say that the Brajabūlī literature of Assam is indistinguishable from that of Bengal.[126] Mr. Medhi shows many differences between the two.[127] Firstly Radha has no place in the Assamese 'Brajabūlī literature; secondly, the Assamese Brajabūlī lyricists contemplate their state as servitude (*Dásya*) while in Bengal it is friendship (*Sakhya*), even conjugal love (*Patipatníbháva*; and it may be added lastly, Assamese writers wrote Maithili dramas also which were completely absent in Bengal.

The evolution of Brajabūlī in Assam is due mainly to the connection.

> "of the people of Kamarūpa with those of Videha (Mithila)...as also to the direct contact of Śaṅkara Deva with the speakers of Maithili.......including

125. *History of Brajabūlī Literature*, p. 373.
126. As Dr. Sen seems to imply in Ibid, p. 1.
127. JKAMRUPA IX 3-4, p. 71-72, see also *Hindustānī* 944.

> the learned men during his first pilgrimage in the fifteenth century A.D. This great religious reformer and his followers have produced a vast Brajabuli Literature in Assam, only an insignificant part of which has just been published."[128]

In the history of Assamese, Brajabūlii occupies an important place; it was able to lay the foundations of Assamese Literature.

Assamese Brajabūlī lyrics inspired by Vidyāpati can be roughly divided into two groups—the Baragīts (or the Celestial songs) and the Ankera Gīts (songs of the dramas called Ankia Nats). They also have like Maithili songs of Vidyāpati (1) indications of the Rāgas, showing that they were also meant to be sung actually, (2) 'Bhanitās', (3) Dhru-padas, (4) and the subject-matter is based on the story of Kṛṣṇa. The direct influence of Braja on the subject-matter of the Assamese Brajabuli poets is more noticeable than on that of the Bengali Brajabulī poets.

The language of the Baragīts is not as pure Maithili as that of the Ankiā dramas. Not only are there a larger number of Brajabhāṣā words, but in them we find more changes in Maithili spellings and phonetics,[129] though Maithili peculiarities still persist: such as, the predominance of the dentals (especially dental *sa*), the writing of *ya* as *ja* when pronounced as *ja*, the writing of *ya* or *va* as *a* when pronounced as *ya* or *va*, the use of short *i* and short *u*, etc.

Traditionally the number of Baragīts is given to be 240.[130] But the available songs

128. JKAMRUPA VIII 4, p. 104.

129. Ibid. X 1-2, p. 2.

130 Dr. Banikanta Kakati mentions in his *Purani Assamiyā Sāhitya*, p. 58 that another tradition gives the number of Madhavadeva's songs to be 191. The Baragīts have been edited by (a) Sivanātha Bhattacharya and

number only 207—of which 41 (or rather 35 only) are by Śaṅkaradeva, 154 by Mādhavadeva, 1 by Rāmacaraṇa Thākura, 1 by Daityāri Thākura and 10 by Puruṣottama Thākura.

The Baragīts "have poetic beauty, tenderness of sentiment and loftiness of thought."[131] They produced a revolution in Medieval Assamese literature. Dr. Banikanta Kakati describes this in the following words:

"बरगीत आरु पूरणि साहित्यर आन आन गीतबोरर पार्थक्य एये। बरगीतबोर ओला नैतिक आरु आध्यात्मिक भावर उपरत प्रतिष्ठित। सेइ कारणेइ सेइबोरक बरगीत बोला हय। इङ्गरेज कवि हेरिकउ (Herrick) केतबोर आध्यात्मिक भावर कविता रचना करि सेइबोरर नाम दिछिल Noble Numbers, आमार साहित्यतो बरगीतबोर Noble Numbers.

एतिया देखा गल ये पुरणि साहित्यत गीतर प्राचुर्य थाकिलेउ बरगीतबोर भाव आरु भाषात अतिशय बेलेग धरणर। साहित्य आरु धर्म्म जगतत सेइबोरे नूतन युगर आगमन सूचना करिछिल। एकाले लोकरञ्जन आरु आनकाले अतर्कितभावे आध्यात्मिकतार ओख आदर्शले जन समाजर मन आकर्षण —एये असमीया गीत साहित्यत बरगीतर एतिहासिक विशेषत्व।"[132]

(3) *Orissa*

In Orissa the earliest influence of Maithili is visible in the first decades of the 16th century. We know M.M. Govinda Thākura, the author of *Pujápradipa* and *Kávyapradípa*, to have visited Orissa, but in the main Bengalis acted as the source of Maithili influence in Orissa. For, the earliest known Brajabuli poem in Orissa is dedicated to Pratāpa-rudra-

(b) Kantiram Burhabhakta. Śaṅkaradeva's Baragīts have been edited by Rajmohan Nath B.A. and published by Assamese Provincial Sankar Sangh, (Head) Office, P.O., Puranigodama, Nagaon, Assam.

131. Barua—*Assamese Literature* (published by the Indian P. E. N. All-India Centre, Aryasangha, Malabar Hills, Bombay).

132. B. K. Kakati, *Puraṇi Asamīyā Sāhitya*, pp. 57-58.

deva (1504-1532) king of Orissa. Its author was Rāmānanda Rai the famous poet and dramatist of Orissa. A vivid description of his meeting with Caitanya is given by Dr S kumar Sen :

> "When Caitanyadeva started on his pilgrimage to the peninsular India, he was requested by Vāsudeva-Sārvabhauma, one of the most reputed Bengali scholars of the time to meet Rāmānanda at Vidyā-nagara Rāmānanda had good reputation as a fine scholar and a mystic poet. The Master and the Mystic met on the bank of the Godāvari, and they were mutually attracted At evenfall they had a meeting at the house of the official when ensued a very interesting and remarkable discourse. This interview and intercourse has had an able, brilliant and full treatment by the masterly pen of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja in the 8th chapter of the II BK, of the *Caitanya-Caritāmṛta.* Caitanyadeva asked Rāya what was the ultimate aim of Vaiṣṇava religion and philosophy. Rāmānanda gave the obvious answer, but of course, the Master was not to be satisfied. Skilfully led onwards by the clever and penetrating questions of the latter, Rāmānanda was at last unable to express himself any further with the help of any quotations from scriptures or otherwise. Then he asked the Master's permission to express his sentiments through a poem he had written. Hardly two lines had been recited when Caitanya-deva was greatly moved and stopped further progress of the recital. So far as contemporararary evidence goes this poem is the earliest (?) Brajabuli composition..........[133]

This event took place at Vidyānagara on the Godāvari river in 1511 or 1512. The poem is quoted below :

पहिलहि राग नयन भंग भेल ।
अनुदिन बाढ़ल अवधि ना गेल ॥
न सो रमण न हाम रमणी ।
दुहुँ मन मनोभव पेषल जनि ॥
ए सखि सोँ सब प्रेम-कहानी ।
कानु ठा(आ ?)मे कहबी बिछुरह जानी ॥

133. Sukumar Sen. *op. cit.*, p. 28.

न बोलबौं दोति न बोलबौं बान ।
दुहुँक मिलाने मध्यत पाँच बाब ॥
अब सो विरागे दुहुँ मेलि दोति ।
सुपुरुष-प्रेमक ऐसन रीति ॥
वर्धन रुद्रनराधिप मान ।
रामानन्द राय पति (कवि ?) भाव ॥[134]

Mr. Priyaranjana Sen has recently published a collection of Brajabuli poems of Rāya Rāmānanda.[135] It contains more than hundred beautiful lyrics on devotion to Kṛṣṇa and is in many ways far superior to the average Brajabulī poems. Its Maithili is mixed with Brajabhāṣā, Oriyā and Bengali. The following is quoted as a specimen :

सभ सखागणे कृष्ण बोलए वचन ।
स्नाहान यद्यामा मोरे मिलब आसन ॥
सुरेशमन्दिरे बिजे हरि हलधर ।
गोपाल चलेन घरे स्नाहाने तत्पर ॥
नित्यकर्म सारिसरे भेटल मोहन ।
चन्दन चोयाछे केह दिखाए दर्पण ॥
मलय कुसुम मधुश्री अङ्गे मंडल ।
रामानन्द चिन्ति रूप आनन्दे बूड़ल ॥[136]

The peculiarities of these lyrics are that devotion is expressed in extremely good taste and that the sports of Kṛṣṇa are described at different hours of the day.

Other important Orissa poets in the 16th century who wrote in Brajabūli are Campati Rai[137]

134. Ibid.

135. *Rāya Rāmānandera Bhaṇitāyukta Padāvalī*, published by Manikalala Dutt, 24 Bagmari Road Calcutta, 1352.

136. p. 13.

137. Alias 'Sukavi Vidyapati'; Dr. Sukumar Sen, *op. cit.* pp. 15-55 and Radhamohan Thakura's *Padāmṛtasamudra*, pp. 192-194.

a Mahāpātra of Mahārāja Pratāparudradeva, and Prataparudradeva himself. Mādhavī Dāsī (a lady),—Kanhu Dāsa and Murāri are minor Brajabūlī poets who are also quoted in "Padakalpataru" and "Kṣaṇada Cintamaṇi,"

In the next century, we find three great poets who contributed to Oriya Brajabuli literature. They are Rai Dāmodara Dāsa, Canda Kavi, and Yadupati Dasa. The first two flourished in the court of Ramacandra Deva I, the Gajapati (king) of Puri, and the last in the court of the Orissa ruler Narasimha Deva. All these poets composed songs following the footsteps of Vidyapati though their language is more akin to the language of Caṇḍidasa.[138]

Oriyā Brajabuli literature is still unexplored. It was in the main the result of contacts which Bengali Vaiṣṇavas had with the people of Orissa. Rightly Radhāmohan Thākura observes :

"श्रीमहाप्रभुर उड़िस्यार नीलाचले दीर्घकाल अवस्थमेर फले संखाने असंख्य बाङ्गाली भक्तादिगेर यातायात ओ अवस्थान हेतु ब्रजबूली ओ बाङला कीर्तन पदावलीर बहुल प्रचार एवं प्राचीन उड़िया भाषाय आहित प्राचीन बाङलार अधिकतर सादृश्यहेतु श्रीमहाप्रभूर भक्त उड़िस्यावासी कवि चम्पतिर पक्षे खाटि बाङ्ला ओ बाङ्ला मिश्रित ब्रजबूली भाषाय पदरचना करा एमन असंभव मने हय ना।[139]

(4) *Nepal*

There was one more country where Vidyāpati was a great force. In the kingdom of Nepal the Maithils had gained access long ago and had gradually introduced their vernacular in the

138. The information contained in this paragraph has been supplied to me by my friend Prof. Bimal Kishore Misra, Orissa.

139. Introduction to his collection of Padas, p. 113, (quoted by Priyaranjana Sen, *Râya Râmânandera Bhaṇitâyukta Padâvalî*, Introduction, p. 9).

traditional Sanskrit dramas which were customarily acted there on all ceremonial occasions. It thus gradually became the court language of Nepal; the Malla Kings of Nepal themselves wrote after Vidyāpati and induced many poets and musicians to do the same. An account of them is given elsewhere below.

While there was so much appreciation and understanding of Vidyāpati throughout the Prācyadeśa (Eastern India), it may be noted that there was no notice taken of him in the Madhyadeśa (Hindustan or the Mid-land).

IV

MODERN APPRECIATION OF VIDYAPATI

Vidyapati Criticism

The earliest writer to attempt an evaluation of Vidyāpati on critical lines was Mr. Beams in the *Indian Antiquary* for 1873 and 1875. Then, in 1878-9 Babu Akshay Chandra Sarkar of Chinsurah published the great *Prácína Kávya-Sangraha* in a series of volumes and added to it an introduction on Vidyāpati as well. It was, however, by the late Shardā Charan Mitter that fresh light was thrown on his work in the excellent Introduction to an expurgated edition of *Vidyápati Padávalí* (1878-9). This Introduction was later translated by Grierson in the *Indian Antiquary*.

It was also at this time, that Sir George Grierson brought out his famous *Maithili Chrestomathy* (Extra No. JRASB 1880-2) containing 82 songs of Vidyāpati in correct Maithilī. A little earlier, Mr. Rajakrishna Mukhopādhyāya had declared emphatically that the real Vidyāpati, whose nationality people had come to dispute (see e.g. Rāmāgati Nyāyaratna's

"Sahitya Viṣayaka" 1873 : they were so much at home with Vidyāpati that they could not believe that he was not a Bengali) was a Maithila, in a memorable article in "Banga-Darśana", which was translated into English by Mr. Beams. Grierson confirmed his conclusions; Romesh Chandra Dutt and Mm Hara Prasad Shastri later on supported him, though such persons as Kailash Ghosh (e g. in *Bangalá Sáhitya* 1893) continue to believe the myth of Vidyāpati-and-Caṇḍīdasa-meeting, or that of Vidyāpati-and-Caitanya-meeting (circulated by the author of *Advaita Prakása*), and hold that at least the real Vidyāpati wrote in Bengali as well (this is still the view of Śrī Khagendranātha Mitra[140])

The next stage in Vidyāpati criticism was a natural corollary of that unhappy classification of Grierson which gave the impression that Maithili was a dialect of Hindi, the effects of which are not over even today. Babu Brajnandana Sahāya of district Arrah was the first to hail him as a Hindi classic and called him the "Nightingale of Mithilā" in 1908 and published about 400 of his songs with a long introduction and notes. Two years later, a Hindī edition of Babu Nagendranatha Gupta's collection of Vidyāpati's Padas was published from the Indian Press, Allahabad. Henceforth all those who wrote on Hindi literature included Vidyāpati as a classic of Hindi. The earliest of them were the Miśrabandhu who placed him in the Early Middle Period of Hindī and later on regarded him as the tenth 'Ratna'. The next attempts were made by Śrī Benīpurī in the introduction to his edition of *Vidyápati*, by Dr. Babu Ram Saxena in the introduction to his edition of the *Kírtilatá*, by Dr. Janardana Mishra in his work on *Vidyápati*, by Prof. Kripa Natha Mishra in the introduction to

140. Preface to his edition of Vidyāpati's poems.

Vidyapati in the Bengali portion of *Kavitá Kaumudí*, by Âcharya Rama Chandra Shukla in his *History of Hindi Literature*, by Babu Shyamasundara Dasa in *History of Hindi Language and Literature* and by Dr. Rama Kumara Varma in his *Critical History of Hindi*.

Meanwhile, there was considerable revival of Maithili in its home districts. 'English' education penetrated its area with a slow pace, and though Maithili was not recognised, yet the old way of appreciating the poet by merely imitating and singing his songs gave way to sound critical scholarship. Kavīśvara Canda Jha (1830-1907) belonged to the border line of the two groups. He helped Babu Nagendranatha upta in his monumental task of restoring Vidyāpati to his original colours. He collected for him songs current in Mithilā, gave him the *Rágatarangini* Ms. and helped him generally in interprecing the traditions connected with the life and work of the poet. This is why Babu Nagendranatha Gupta's introduction to *Vidyápati* contains most of the valuable things otherwise difficult to collect. The next generation of Vidyāpati scholars included Mm. Parameshwara Jha, Mm. Muralidhara Jha, Mm. Mukunda Jha Bakhśī and Pandit Cetanatha Jha, but they could not add many things to what the Kavīśvara had done. Shivanandan Thakur discovered an altogether new set of Vidyapati's songs and his work on Vidyapati's language marked a new stage. Other workers in the field are Rājapaṇḍita Baladeva Mishra, Harinandana Thakur 'Saroja', Babuāji Mishra, Mm. Balakrishna Mishra, Mm. Dr. Umesha Mishra, Babu Narendranatha Dasa, Ramanatha Jha, Dr. Subhadra Jha, Surendra Jha 'Suman' and Ishanatha Jha. The present Mahārājādhiraja of Darbhanga started a Vidyāpati Prize in the Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad (Darbhanga), and Harivansha Jha has organised the 'Vidyāpati Smāraka Samiti'. With the efforts of

Narendranatha Dasa, Vidyapati Anniversary has come to be celebrated regularly since 1929.

Review of Work Done

(1) *Vidyāpati's nationality*

Among the topics on which discussion has centred so far this is no longer in dispute.

(2) *His Date*

Fortunately we have very much more definite information regarding him than about many Indian poets. The Ms. of *Bhāgavata* copied by him bears a date which was variously read as 309 La. Sam. (Canda Jha and Nagendranatha Gupta), 349 La. Sam. (B. Sahaya) or 389 La. Sam. (Jivanatha Ray). Ramanatha Jha, and I myself have worked out and seen that it is 309 La. Sam.[141] La. Sam. has been another source of discussion; all views are summarised in *History of Bengal* (Vol. I), Dacca University, though I believe that the La. Sam. is a lunar calender and has only 360 days in a year and therefore in every 73 years, there should be a difference of 360 days in giving a La. Sam. Thus, if to-day it is La. Sam. 837 with a difference of 1109 years from the Christian Era, at the time of Vidyāpati it must have been a difference of 1119 years from the Christian Era. The genuineness of the copper-plate grant of Bispi,[142] of the date "anala-randhra-kara" in a poem,[143] of the references to

141. See "Vidyāpati-Ka Hatha-Ka Likhala Bhāgavata," *Bhārati* I, (reprinted in *Maithili Gadya Mañjūṣā*, Mitra Mandala, Laheriaserai), and *Maithili* (Ms Magazine published from Isahapura, Darbhanga.)

142. JRASS XVIII Pt. 1 p. 96, and photo in JASB 1895, Aug. (Proceedings.)

143. Poem given in Khagendranath Mitra, *Vidyapati*, p. 340.

Maithila personalities and the validity of evidences based on traditions have all been disputed. Dr. Shahidullah has recently gathered most of those points, but he has ignored the native evidences.[144] Shivanandana Thakura has too complacently quoted from the *Brahma-Vaivarta Purána* to prove a tradition that has been able to show that the poet died in October 1448.[145]

(3) *His Ancestory and Life History*

Barring his connection with Jyotirisvara, the author of *Varna-Ratnákara*, most of the facts have been now ascertained. There are, however, certain minor points in the chronology of the Oinivara Dynasty (with which he was intimately associated) still undecided, as evidences are few. Pt. Ramanatha Jha has finally summarised all known facts about his ancestors.[146]

(4) *His Religious Views.*

Deluded by the Bengali interpretation of Vidyāpati's songs, Grierson found all his Radhā-Kṛṣṇa songs to be Vaiṣṇava Hymns or *Bhajans*.[147] Mm. Haraprasad Śāstri [148] and, earlier, Nagendranatha Gupta emphatically declared that he was not a Vaiṣṇava at all.[149] Pt. Ramanatha Jha[150] has given a detailed summary of almost all the possible arguments ; (1) In his own land Vidyāpati's devotional songs are not those on Kṛṣṇa but Śiva. (2) Vaiṣṇava Bhajans

144 IHQ, VII.

145 See above f. n. 42 and 43.

146 Published in *Mihira*, 1945.

147 See *Maithili Chrestomathy*

148 Introduction to *Kīrtilatā*.

149 Introduction to *Vidyāpati*.

150 *Maithili Gadya Sangraha* III (published by Maithili Sahitya Parisad, Darbhanga.)

are not liked by the common folk in Mithilā, if they need them they borrow from Surdasa and Tulsidasa. Maithili Vaiṣṇava poems are very few and have been never popular beyond the small number of Vaiṣṇava Sādhus. (3) Only a few of his songs refer directly to Lord Kṛṣṇa; and may be in those songs where any reference is made, it is perhaps to 'Kṛṣṇa' coloured Mahārāja Śiva-Singha and his consort. (4) His songs are intended to be love songs for which Jayadeva and the *Bhágavata* supplied the Kṛṣṇa legend as suitable material. (5) Caitanya the founder of 'Parakiya Vaiṣṇava bhāva' was born 100 years 'after' Vidyāpati; it is true that he was interpreted as a Vaiṣṇava by Caitanya and his followers but that does not prove that he was a Vaiṣṇava. (6) The copy of *Srimad-bhágavata* made by the poet is similarly no proof that he was a Vaiṣṇava. The poet was in a sorrowful mood, his friend Mahārāja Śiva Singha had disappeared for an indefinite period, and he copied it probably to atone for having written amorously of Lord Kṛṣṇa. (I differ from this last interpretation for several reasons. The existence of an unusually large number of songs with Śiva-Singha and Lakhima in the Bhanita becomes defficult to account for in the very short period of about six years of the reign of Śiva-Singha; and the necessity of using the *Bhágavata* as a source of inspiration might easily explain his long occupation of copying the *Bhágavata*. There is, however, nothing essentially wrong in Vidyāpati having been copying devotedly a Purāṇa while he might at the same time have been composing love songs in the manner of Jayadeva on Kṛṣṇa's love story. In this connection, it is but meet to remember that in the *Kírttipatáka* he considerd the Kṛṣṇavatāra as a life of earthly enjoyment primarily[151]

151. See above f.n. 66 and the text thereof.

(5) His Authentic Padas

Grierson[152] and Dr. Subhadra Jha[153] and (finally) Dr. B. B. Majumdar[154] have analysed the Bhaṇitās of Vidyāpati in the most exhaustive manner. Dr. Majumdar concludes that poems with the titles 'Kaviśekhar', 'Śekhara', 'Campati' or 'Kaviarañjana' are not by Vidyāpati. The authentic finds of Vidyāpati's poems are those described in these three articles, and those published by Ramānatha Jha,[155] and those collected by Rajapaṇḍita Baladeva Mishra[156]. During my recent visit to Nepal I discovered a fresh anthology of Maithili poems which contains about 60 songs of Vidyāpati. There has been so far no attempt to amend the text already in hand. With the knowledge of Vidyāpati's handwriting on such a large scale, much could be done in this respect. Some of the readings have been analysed by Narendranatha Dasa[157] and Shivanandana Thakura[158] but more careful work is necessary. By far the best edition of Vidāpati still remains to be that of Nagendranatha Gupta which has now been re-edited by Amulyacarana Vidyābhūṣaṇa and Khagendranatha Mitra along with poems from the "Mithilāgīta Sangraha." It, however, excludes Shivanandana Thakura's, R. Jha's and my finds.

152. IA XIV p. 188.

153. *Seeker* April, 1942.

154. JBORS XXVIII pt. iv p. 406.

155. JGJRI II iv pp. 403-416.

156. Before him MM Muralidhara Jha, Pt. Chetanatha Jha, MM Parameshvara Jha and known MM Mukunda Jha are known to have also collected the poems of Vidyāpati.

157. Appendix to *Vidyāpati Kāvyāloka* by N. Das.

158. *Mahākavi Vidyāpati*, published by Pustaka Bhandara, Patna.

(8) *Aesthetic Estimate of Vidyápati*

That he has been naturalised in Bengali and Hindi is enough proof that he is a master singer. But there have been different views regarding the most permanent part of his work. To Grierson, he is great because of his Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Bhajans; to MM. Haraprasāda Śāstrī, he is great because he is a Sanskrit scholar, and (in his mother tongue) a supreme poet of earthly love; to MM. Dr. Umesha Mishra he is a court poet who writes of love in his youth but turns to devotional songs of Śiva and Sakti in later age; to the common-folk of Mithilā he is a great singer who gave them the best and the largest number of 'occassional' songs; and to the lover of poetry, he appears to be great, because he is able to seize and re-create moments of highest experience in words, full of emotive and associative values.

There has been a very large amount of appreciation in Histories of Bengali Literature and various Journals such as 'Bengal Magazine', 'Indian Antiquary', 'Search-light' and 'Indian Nation' etc. (English); 'Bhāratī', 'Anusandhana', 'Udayana', 'Sāhitya', 'Janmabhūmi', 'Pratibha', 'Sāhitya Samhitā', 'Baṅgadarśana' (which published many of his poems too), 'Mānasī' etc. (Bengali);, 'Lekhamālā', 'Madhurī', 'Sāhitya Sandeśa' etc. (Hindi), 'Mithilāmihira', 'Śrī-Maithilī', 'Mithilā', 'Bhāratī', 'Mithilāmitra' etc. (Maithilī). Comparative criticism has been attempted by Narendranatha Dasa and Shivanandana Thakura. Shivanandana Thakura discusses separately some of Vidyāpati's similes and Alaṅkāras. A proof of his power of pithy expression and wide popularity is given by MM. Dr. Umesha Mishra's long list of Vidyāpati's proverbs. The appreciation of MM. Haraprasad Sastri (in the introduction to his edition of *Kīrttilatā*) is in several respects still unsurpassed.

There has not been any extensive work done in determining the quality, the force and the

background of his imagery. Nor has there been any psychological and social explanation of the feeling behind his poetry. There is a great necessity to study his sources, to publish the authentic Padas in chronological order, to determine what is exactly meant by the Vidyāpati Tradition and to explain his technique. Of course, these must be done before we can have a glimpse of the intellect and personality of the man as revealed in his poems.

(7) *Vidyāpati's Portrait*

There has not been much discussion on this subject. Śrīmāna Kanhaiyāji and Śrī Upendra Mahārathī are said to have been interested in this. Barring Babu Bholalala Das,[159] there has been no serious attention given to it, even when we know how a poet dressed in his days (from the *Varnaratnākara*) ; a large number of oral tradition regarding his life ; the village, the home, the Kuladevatā and various other things which Vidyāpati used. There was an attempt to give a semblance of Vidyāpati in a 'scandalous' film, on his life.

(8) *His Language and Prosody*

Among several things that remain to be said about Vidyāpati are : (1) full philological description of the language of Vidyāpati. Shivanandana Thakura[160] attempted this on the basis of his own finds only ; B. K. Chatterji [161] did not care to work on original sources, and Dr. Subhadra Jha's work is not yet out ; (2) a detailed discussion of Vidyāpati's prosody and (3) a complete History of Mithilā School of music which Vidyāpati perfected.

159. Article in *Mihira* 1941.

160. *Vidyāpati Kī Bhāṣā*, (published as part of 'Mahākavi Vidyāpati' by S. Thakura).

161. Journal of Department of Letters, Calcutta University.

Conclusion

We have seen above the chequered career that the fame of Vidyāpati had during the ages. We have not discussed the fame he has enjoyed as one of the most respected Dharma-śāstra Naibandhikas but we have seen how he has been regarded as a principal poet-musician of the grade of Jayadeva in his own country, how he came to be revered as a Vaiṣṇava saint in Bengal and other countries, and how only recently we have begun to study him seriously as a great poet. We have also seen how the early discussions were occupied with calling him a Bengali or a Hindi poet, how he was re-established as a Maithili poet, how his authentic verses were discovered, how his life history was reconstructed, how he was found to be a "smārtta pañcadevopāsaka" more truly described as a devotee of Śiva and Śakti than a devotee of Viṣṇu and how his poetic characteristics have been studied or neglected. Happily we have now a very large number of his authentic poems and we have passed the age of idle idolatory of the poet. The time has come when we should concentrate on his work on modern lines of criticism. This should not mean any abatement of our efforts in finding out new facts and new texts or in editing and publishing the unpublished works of the poet.

There is every justification for the early boast of the poet that his poetry cannot be adversely criticised,[162] it readily charms the hearts of the cultured, or for the remark that "After all Vidyāpati, Kabira, Mirabai, Tulsidāsa and Nānaka have become the poets not merely of Maithili, Hindi, (Gujarati), or Punjabi but

162. *Kīrttilatā* (Dr. Saksena's edition) p.

of India,"[163] or for the praises that Romain Rolland, Coomara Swamy, Tagore and a host of others have voluntarily showered upon his verses, I shall close this chapter which has already gone very much beyond its limits with the following remark of Rai Bahadur Dinesha Chandra Sen, the famous Historian of Bengali Literature :

> "No other person in the world, not even my brother, sister, or wife has given me such joy as these two lyric poets (Vidyāpati and Caṇḍīdāsa) have done "[164]

163. Pannikar in *The Golden Book of Tagore*, p. 194, (quoted in *Vidyâpati Kâvyâloka* p. 278).

164. Quoted in *Vidyâpati Kâvyâloka* p. 15.

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CHAPTER VI

CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS OF VIDYAPATI (c. 1400—c. 1700)

I

INTRODUCTORY

The extant literature of this period is found in two kinds of repositories : (1) the anthologies (or stray finds) of lyrics, and (2) the anthologies of Rāgas and Rāgiṇīs. There is no doubt that a large number of poets are now irretrievably lost to us, but recent investigations have enabled us to get a general idea of quite a few of them.

(1) *Anthologies of Lyrics*—are of two classes: (1) those which form part of "Vidyāpati-Padāvalīs" and (2) those which are independent works.

Of the former class, (A) Nagendranatha Gupta's find "TARAUNI PALM-LEAF MS" deserves first notice. It was the earliest authentic anthology of this period that was discovered. It is said that

> "a Brāhmaṇa of Deoghar (S(anthal) P(arganna)) belonging to Vidyāpati's family presented this Ms. to......the late Bipin Behari Ghosh, and...... Mohini Mohan Datta, a Munsif, then stationed at Samastipur, borrowed it from...the late Purona Chandra Ghosh and handed it over to the late Justice Saradacharan Mitra, who again lent it to N(agendra) N(atha) G(upta)"[1].

1. JBORS XXVIII pt. iv, p. 416.

Nagendranatha records a tradition which makes the scribe of this Ms. to be a great-grandson of Vidyapati. It is also pointed out that this Ms. was originally found along with the Ms. of *Srímad-Bhágavat* in Vidyapati's own hand. At any rate, the appearance of the Ms. was 300 years old and it may be relied upon as a fairly authentic source. Its compiler's name is unknown as the Ms. was incomplete. Unfortunately, the Ms. was lost from the Calcutta University Library. All that we have now left of it is found in the published edition of Vidyāpati's poems by Nagendranatha Gupta. It seems that the Ms. originally "contained more than 100 poems written by poets other than Vidyāpati."[2]

(b) MM. Haraprasad Śastri's find, the so-called "NEPAL MS. of VIDYÂPATI-PADÂVALI" is "believed to have been copied in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, though its script is almost similar to (that of) the Kaiṇaparvaṁ of the *Mahábhárata*, copied in 1447 A.D."[3] It contains poems of thirteen poets other than Vidyapati. Dr. Subhadra Jha has been permitted to publish this Ms. by the Nepal Government and it is understood that he has prepared its press copy. Two photographic copies of it are available at the Patna University Library and the Patna College Library.

(C) Shivanandana Thakura's find "RÂMA-BHADRAPURA PALM-LEAF MS." is a comparatively recent discovery. Mr. Thakura got it from Viṣṇulála Śastri. The Ms. is unsigned and undated, but appears to be about 300 years old. It has been published by the Maithili Sahitya Pariṣad (Darbhanga). Only two poems

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid, p 408 and Dr. Subhadra Jha in *Sasher* for April, 1942, pp. 26-30.

in it are definitely known to be by Amṛtakara, but 24 Padas bearing no Bhanita may be either by Vidyapati or by others. The present Ms. has only 29 per cent of the leaves of the complete work which appears to be rather an anthology of Ragas than that of lyrics. The Ms. is in the Bihar Research Society (*vide* JBRS XXX V pts. 1 and 2, pp. 28-32, article by Dr. B. Majumdar on this MS)

(D) Lastly, Ramanatha Jha's find "RAJ LIBRARY MS." is a slender thing. It has been critically edited in the JGJRI[4]. It contains one song by Lakhiminatha and one anonymous incomplete song.

Of the latter class, the most important work is (A) MM. Haraprasada Sastri's and Dr. P. C. Bagchi's find "BHAṢÂ-GITA MS.—(A)". It is a remarkable collection of Maithili songs in the Nepal Durbar Library. It was probably compiled by Bhūpatīndra-Malla (1695-1722). Dr. Bagchi says that it contains 81 poems only. I have, however, found another Ms. of this work in the Library of Rajaguru Hemaraja Sharma of Nepal, which contain 173 poems. This second Ms, which we may call "BHAṢÂ-GITA MS.—(B)", is fresh in appearance and has 99 poems in one hand-writing and 74 poems in another hand-writing. There are 8 identifiable poets and a few anonymous poets represented in this anthology.

(B) Next comes the present writer's find "KAMSA-NÂRÂYANA-PADÂVALI". It contains 146 poems of about 24 poets including Vidyapati. It is preserved in Rajaguru Hemaraja Sharma's Library (Nepal). No name of the compiler or the date of compilation is found in the MS. The Ms. is in fairly beautiful Tirhuta and appears to be 200 years old.

4. Vol. II part 4 pp. 403-416.

(C) Lastly, we learn of two poets from the stray finds of Cetanatha Jha, quoted in his introduction to Umapati's *Párijáta-harana.*

(2) *Anthologies of Music*—are three. The most important of them is Locana's *Rága-taranginí* (c. 1681).[5] It is fully described at the appropriate place below. Other works are Locana's *Rágasangítasangraha*[6] (which we have not been able to discover) and Jagajjyotirmalla's *Sangítacandra*[7] which quotes some vernacular songs.

II

CONTEMPORARIES OF VIDYAPATI

(c. 1400-c. 1527)

In describing poets who are Vidyāpati's contemporaries, a large number of poets who are known to us simply as dramatists have not been taken into consideration here. Only those poets figure here who have written independent poems in addition to dramas. Besides, it has not been possible to follow chronological sequence very strictly; where it is difficult to assess the sequence correctly, names have been arranged alphabetically.

1. *Amṛtakara*[8]

He was the well-known son of Candrakara Kāyastha, the minister of Mahārāja Śivasiṁha (1413-1416), a descendant of Śrīdharadāsa

5. Published from Raj Library, Darbhanga.
6. Referred to in RT, p. 36.
7. *Nepal Cat.* p. 260-2.
8. One poem in RT, p. 85; two poems in S, Nos. 68 and 82; two poems in N, Nos. 175 and 179.

(c. 1097).[9] The Bhaṇitas of his poems indicate that he was a contemporary of Vidyāpati, Śivasiṁha and Bhairavasiṁha (1446?- 1482?)[10] The poet Vidyāpati is said to have paid compli-

9. The famous minister of Nanyadeva, (See—JBORS IX p. 303), of the Balāinī family of Karṇa Kāyasthas. His geneology has been thus given by Bholālāladāsa (*Vibhuti* I, 7. p. 15) :

Śrīdhara (c. 1097)
|
His descendant Sūryakara Thākura (contemporary of Mahārāja Harisiṁhadeva c. 1324 ; helped him to organise the Pañji System).
|
His son Candrakara
|
His son Amṛtakara
|
His sons Vijayakara and Nityakara Kāyastha

Vijayakara
|
His grandson Kroṇakara (c. 1527)
|
His descendant Raghunandanadāsa (died 1945)

Nityakara Kāyastha
|
His sons (1) Vetu and (2) Narahari who became ministers in Kutch Raj.

(१) भनइ अमिअकर सुनु मथुरापति रामचरित अपारे ।
राजा शिवसिंह रूपनराएन लखिमा देइ कण्ठहारे ॥ (BT p. 85)

(२) भनइ अमृत अनुरागे, कपटे कुसुमसर कौतुके गाहे ।
जसमा देवि रमाने, भैरवसिंह भूप रस जाने ॥ (S. No. 68)

(३) सुकवि अमृतकरे गाओल रे पुहवी-नव पञ्चबान ।
मधुमति देवि... .. ....* हरि विरेखर जान ॥ (S, No. 82)

*(This hiatus may be Śivasiṁha, as one of his queens is known to have been called Madhumati, and as Amṛtakara was so much interested in the fortunes of Śivasiṁha's family.)

ments to his qualities of head and heart in glowing terms

"नीति निपुण गुण नाह अंक मे अविरल कुशल ।
कोष-काव्य-व्याकरण अधिक अधिकारक सागर ॥
सबकर कर सम्मान सबहुँ सौं नेह बढ़ाबिअ ।
बिपदीन अतिदुखी सबहुँकाँ बिपत्ति छोड़ाबिअ ॥
बाचस्प माँह सुरसिंह भउ चन्द्र सुलाइन शशिधर ।
"कविकंठहार" फल उचरह अमिअ बरसह अमिअकर ॥"[11]

Canda Jha describes[12] the great service he rendered to Sivasimha's family in its hour of need. He went to Patna and succeeded in inducing the Imperial Officer to re-instate the Rājā of Tirhut at Bachaur in Parganna Padmā. He seems to have lived on to the days of Mahārāja Bhairavasimha. It is possible that he was a "popular poet" as Dr. Mazumdar asserts[13] but it seems, however, that he was primarily a man of affairs, not a man of letters. His extant poems are love poems which might have been written for the pleasure of the court in imitation of Vidyāpati.

2 *Candrakalā.*[14]

Locana quotes the single extant poem

(४) भनइ अमृतकर——(N, No. 175)
(५) भनेइ अमिअंकर——(N, No. 179)

We have no reason to doubt that Amṛtakara, Amiakara could be written in Early Maithili poetry as अमिअकर or अमिअंकर and hence all these names refer to the same person.

11. Narendranathadasa, *Vidyāpati Kāvyāloka*, Intr. p. ज

12. Appendix to the Maithili translation of *Purusa Parīkṣā* by Canda Jha.

13. JBORS XXVIII pt. iv p. 410.

14. BT p. 54.

of Candrakalā and says "इति विद्यापतिपुत्रवध्वाः" (*i.e.* this is a poem of Vidyāpati's daughter-in-law). We learn from Pañjī records that Vidyāpati had three sons—Harapati, Narapati and Vācaspati. It is likely that Candrakalā was the wife of Harapati. She seems to have been well-versed in Sanskrit. Her extant poem is mixed with Sanskrit—an example of that kind of bilingualism which is common in Mithila.[15] The poem is quoted to illustrate Prītikarī Rāgiṇī[16] :

स्निग्धकुञ्चितकोमलकुचगण्डमण्डितकोमलम् ।
अधरविम्बसमान सुन्दर शरदचन्द्रनिभाननम् ॥
जय कम्बुकण्ठ विशाललोचनचारुमुज्ज्वलसौरभम् ।
बाहुवल्लिमृणालपङ्कज हारशोभित ते शुभम् ॥
शोभय सुन्दरि मम हृदयं, गद्गदहासस्तु(?)वति निपुणम् ।
उरपीनकठिनविशालकोमल भाति युग्मनिरन्तरम् ॥
श्रीफलाकमलाविचित्रविधातुनिर्म्मलकुचवरम् ।
श्यामा सुवेषा त्रिवलिरेखा जघनभारविलम्बिते ॥
मत्तगजकरजघनयुगवर गमनगतिवरढाजिते ।
सुललित मन्द गमनं करइ, जनि पतिसङ्ग वरढा भमइ ॥

15. See *e.g.* the poem on Gaṅgā by Vidyāpati (Khagendranatha Pada No. 978) and new find of Pt. R. Jha (JGJRI August 1945) and verses in mixed language in *Vidyākarasāhasakam* etc.

16. RT p 53 ; I have in my possession another text of this poem in about hundred and fifty years old Ms :

स्निग्धकिञ्चितकोमलं कुचगण्डमण्डित कुन्तलम्,
अधर बिम्बसमान सुन्दरि शरद चन्द्र निभाननम् ।
जय कम्बुकन्ठ विशाल लोचन चारु द्युति कलसौरभम्,
बाहुयुग्म मृणाल पङ्कज हार शोभय ते शुभम् ।
शोभय सुन्दरि तव वदनं गद्गद हास्य वदति विपुलम्,
उरपीन कठिन विशाल कोमल भात युग्म निरन्तरम् ।
श्रीफला कमला विचित्र विधातु निर्म्मित कुचवरम्,
श्यामातिरेखा त्रिवलितरेखा जघनभार विलम्बिते ।

अतिरूपयौवन-प्रथम-संभव किं वृथा कमला प्रिये ।
तेजह रूप विमोह परिहर शोकचिन्तित चिन्वये ॥
उपघातमदनव्याधिदुस्सह दहत पावक सेवनम् ।
पवन दिसँ दिसँ दहए पावक सुरमदारजमम्बरम् ॥
श्यामासखन्दिते अतिसमयपीतसुशोभिते ।
आत्मदान समान सुन्दरि धार वर्षति विभ्रये ॥
सिञ्चह सुन्दरि मम हृदयम्, अधरसुधामधुपानमिदम् ।
चन्द्र कवि जयदेवमुद्रित मान तेज तोहें राधिके ॥
वचन मम धर कृष्ण अनुसर किन्नु कामकलाधुमे ।
चन्द्रकला है वचन करसी, मानिनि माधव अनुसरसी ॥

3. *Harapati*[17]

Harapati was probably the eldest son of Vidyāpati and is perhaps the same as the author of a manual of Jyotiṣa Śāstra, *Vyavahárapradípiká*[18]. In that work he calls himself as "Mudrāhastaka" (Keeper of the Royal Seal ?) and explains difficult lines by giving equivalent Maithilī verses. There is another Jyotiṣa work, *Daivajna-bándhava*[19], which is

मत्त गजवर बधन युगवर गमन गति वरटाजिते,
सुललित गमन मन्द करइ जनि तेजि वरटा भमइ ।
उपघाति मदन व्याधि दुस्सहि भाविनि सेवनम्,
पवन दिशि दिशि दहति पावक सुरभमदारु क्याव्ऽम् ।
अय अङ्गमसावन्दते वा समय रूप सुशोभिते,
आत्मदान समान सुन्दरि धार वर्षा सिञ्चये ।
सिञ्चय सुन्दरि मम हृदये अधर सुधा मधुपानदये,
अति रूप यौवन प्रथममभद्भुतं कि वृथा रसिक प्रिये ।
तेजसि रोष विमोह परिहरि शोक मुञ्चहि ता प्रिये,
चन्द्र कवि जयदेव निर्म्मित मान तेजसि राधिके ।
वचन मम धर कृष्ण अवसर चन्द्रकमल कलाजिते,
चन्द्रकला है वचन सुनसी.राधामाधव अनुसरसी ।

17. Poem quoted by Dr. Umesha Mishra. *Vidyâpati Thâkura*, 1st End. p. 89.

18. Ramanatha Jha, "*Vidyâpati Thâkura-ka Vamsa*" *Mihira* 1945 ; MMC III p. 419.

19. MMC III p. 169-175.

also reputed to be his work. The author's name in the extant Ms. of this work, however, is given as Haradatta.

4. *Bhánu Kavi*[20]

His name is familiar to us as a literary critic in Sanskrit and a writer of fine Sanskrit verses. Obviously, he was a contemporary of Candra-Simha step-brother of Mahārāja Bhairavasimha (1446?—1482?), who died without leaving an heir. The queen of this Candrasimha is known to have patronised the great Smṛti work *Vivádacandra*[21] of Misarū Miśra. Vidyāpati has also mentioned the name of Candrasimha in his *Durgábhakti-taranginí*[22].

The date of this Bhānu is, therefore, quite certain. But as regards his identity there are certain doubts. There are two Maithila authors known as "Bhānu Miśra" in the family of Sodarapura. They are distinguished in Pañji as[23] :

(a) Bhānu Miśra, son of Viśo Miśra (Sodarapura Kaṭakā Mūlaka), and

(b) MM. Kavirāja Bhānudatta Miśra (Sodarapura Sarisava Mūlaka), author of several Sanskrit works of Sāhitya Śāstra, such as *Rasamanjari*, *Rasataranginí*, *Rasa-Párijáta* and *Kumára-Bhárgavíya-Campú*. His family tree is as follows :

20. N. Pada 234 with "चन्द्रसिंह नरेस जीवओ भानु जम्पए रे" in Bhanita and published by N.G. as Pada 322.

21. Published.

22. End Verse 3.

23. See *Mihira*, June 9, 1945, and June 16, 1945.

24. Introduction to VIDYĀKARA p. 10 and SINGH p. 129 ; but see also SINGH pp. 117 and 118.

Ratneśvara
|
Sureśvara (Sodarapura-grāmoparjaka)
|
MM. Viśvanātha
|
Maho. Ravinātha
|
Bhavanātha alias Ayāci Dūbe
|
MM. Śaṅkara — Maho. Mahādeva[24]
|
(Dhakkā-Kavi) Gaṇapati
|
Bhānudatta
Jānudatta (whose grand daughter's son Gaṅgānanda (c 1616-1685) wrote *Bhṛṅgadūta*).

This 'Bhānu' is also known as "Bhānu" or "Bhānukara Kavi" in Anthologies of Sanskrit poems[24]. His date is round about 1350-1450[25] which fits in with that of Candrasiṁha.

It is, therefore, almost certain that the Maithilī poet Bhānu is identical with the second Bhānu who was both an aesthetician and a poet.

5. *Gajasiṁha*[26]

It appears that Gajasiṁha was a contemporary of a ruler named Puruṣottamadeva,

25. Krishnamachari, *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p 774, Kane, *History of Alaṅkāraśāstra* p. and S. K. De, *Sanskrit Poetics* I p. 241.

26. RT three poems pp. 58-59, 68 and 72 ; one TPMS ; One KNP. Bhanitas :

(१) गुनमय, ओ रे, वीर कुमर सिरि गजसिंह ।
की रस जाने गुनमय कवि गजसिंह भाने ॥ (RT p. 58-59)

(२) गजसिंह नव दुख झाइत कुमर सिरि मन रे ।
नृप पुरुषोत्तम वहि रह तोहि दशावध मिझु रे ॥ (RT, p. 68)

husband of [illegible] Asamati Devi. We know of two Puruṣottamadevas before Locana (who quotes Gajasiṁha's poems):—(1) Puruṣottama *alias* Garuḍanārāyaṇa, son of Mahārāja Bhairavasiṁha (1446?-148?) and queen Jayā,[27] who is praised by Vācaspati Miśra II and who is said to have died without leaving an heir. (2) Mahārāja Puruṣottama Thākurá (1617-1626) Under the circumstances, it is probable that Gajasiṁha flourished under the first Puruṣottama.

A poem in *Rágataranginí*[27] seems to indicate that there was one 'Kumara' Srī Gajasiṁha as well, whom the poet knew. Indeed the poem with Gajasiṁha in the Bhanitā from "TARAUNI PALM-LEAF MS" also refers to one Gajasiṁhadeva, husband of Hāsinidevī, with whom Vidyāpati was acquainted.[28] If the latter poem is correctly quoted by Nagendranatha Gupta, then there is a great possibility of Vidyāpati being a close contemporary of the poet Gajasiṁha.

The poetic qualities of Gajasiṁha's lines are in many ways remarkable. There is charm and fluency in their movement. There is a tender suggestion of the mood of weariness in the following Viraha-Pada:

बिसरल, ओ रे, कैसन सिनेहा पिआ मोरे ।
की परदेश भव रहल पिआ परबस ॥

(३) गजसिंह भन एह पूरब पुन तह ओसनि भजए रसमन्त रे ।
बुझए सकल रस नृप पुरुषोत्तम असमति देइ कन्त हे ॥ RT. p. 72).

(४) भनइ विद्यापति (?)मन दए सेव ।
हासिनि देइ पति गजसिंहदेव ॥ (TPMS Pada 418)

(५) Merely, गजसिंह (K. N. P. No. 95).

27. SINGH p. 76; or according to BAKHSI (p. 540 f.n.) Bṛhaddatta Devi. Also see *Patna University Journal* No. 2, pp. 15 and 17.

28. See above f. n. [illegible]

उपि गए, ओ रे, अनुभवि भल कए जानल।
की निरखए पुरुब जाति के हिरदए॥
पिआ रसि, ओ रे, भलि कए चिनहि गुनमडलि।
की हम, ओ रे, बाँध लहए पिआ मोर जीवओ॥
गुनमय, ओ रे, धीर कुमर सिरि गजसिंह।
की रस जाने गुनमय कवि गजसिंह भाने॥[31]

6. *Rudradhara*[30]

Rudradhara may be identified with Rudradhara Upādhyāya the author of Puṣpamālā, (MMC II p. 8) Śrāddhaviveka, Varṣakṛtya, Vrata paddhati, Śuddhiviveka etc. (MMC. I) He was the son of Lakṣmīdhara and the younger brother of Haladhara. "He quotes the Śuddhipradīpa and the Śrāddhapradīpa (works of Śaṅkara Miśra) though the latter may be the work of Vardhamāna."

His poem is quoted in "NEPAL MS. OF VIDYĀPATI PADĀVALI" No. 270 (Bhanita कवि रुद्रधर एहु भाने).

7. *Kavirāja (Bhikhāri Miśra)*

It appears that Kavirāja was a general title of poets. Therefore, it cannot be said definitely as to who is the person or persons whom we know in the Anthologies merely as 'Kavirāja'. There are, however, some definite indications which might be considered.

29. RT pp. 58-59.

30. Note MMC II (pt. 1) p. 24 and also MMC II (pt. 3) p. 124. The poems in KNP of this poet have these Bhanitas :

(१) No. 74 भन कविराज असमति देवि पति गुनक निधान।

(२) No. 85 'भिखारिमिश्र कविराजस्य' not as Bhanita but as a separate comment.

(३) No. 112 कविराज कुमरदेव।

'Kavirāja' refers in a poem to the husband of Asamati Devī as his patron. Now, we know of one Asamati Devī to be the queen of Puruṣottama *alias* Garuḍanārāyaṇa, son of Bhairavasiṃha (? 1446-? 1482).

But in another song 'Kavirāja' seems to refer to one Sundara Deva as his patron. Of course, there he might as well mean his own name to be 'Sundara Deva.' But if it refers to a patron, then there is a possibility of Mahārāja Puruṣottama Thākura (1617-1627) and Mahārāja Sundara Thākura (1641-1668) as being his patrons.

I have, however, found it expressly mentioned in the "KAMSANÂRÂYANA PADÂVALI" that one Bhikhāri Miśra used 'Kavirāja' as his pen-name in the Bhaṇitās of his vernacular poems.[31] We do know of one Bhikhiā Miśra or Bhikhai as a Maithila poet in an Anthology of Sanskrit verses.[32]

It is, nevertheless, quite possible that all these poets may be different poets.

8. *Daśávadhána* (*Thákura*)[33]

Literally Daśāvadhāna means "any person

31. भिखारी मिश्र कविराजस्य (KNP No. 85)

32. VIDYÂKARA, verses 721 and 737. Of course, it is assumed that भिखिआ, भिखाइक and भिखारी all are different forms of the same name. It may be pointed out, however, that there is one Kavirāja also quoted in VIDYÂKARA but Dr. Mishra indentifies him with a court-poet of Lakṣmaṇa Sen (Introduction, p. 4).

33. Four poems with Bhaṇitās :

(१) दस अवधान भन पुरुष पेम गुनि प्रथम समागम मेला ।
कालमवार प्रभु कामिनि भजि रहु कमलिनि भमर भुलल ॥
(RT, p. 86.)

(२) दस अवधान त्रिभुवन सुन्दर ... (KNP No. 34.)

(३) दसावधान ठाकुरस्य as Comment (KNP No. 100).

(४) N. G. 120 has दामोदर दस ... अवधान in Bhaṇitā.

who can attend to ten or more things simultaneously". Nagendranatha Gupta took 'Daśāvadhana' to be a title of Vidyāpati. There is, however, no doubt that it refers to a different poet. I have found in "Kaṁsa-Nārāyaṇa-Padāvalī Ms." Daśāvadhāna called as Daśāvadhana Thākura.[34] This makes it possible to identify him among several Daśāvadhānas known in contemporary Mithilā.

There are two Daśāvadhana Thākuras of this period.[35] Their family tree is given below :

(*a*) *Of the family of Māṇḍara Ararīā* :

Dhīreśvara (or Dhīrū) Thākura.
(Contemporary of Mahārāja Harisiṁhadeva c. 1324. His cousin was married to Ghusauta Vaṁśīya Ravikara Thākura, the daughter's son of Mahāvārttika-Naibandhika Dhīreśvara ancestor of Vidyāpati Thākura.)

|

Mādhava Thākura

|

Kīrttipati (or Kīrtū) Thākura

|

Rucipati Thākura

|

Narapati Thākura "Daśāvadhāna"

(*b*) *Of the family of Baheraḍī* :

Narahari Thākura (Contemporary of Mahārāja Harisiṁha c. 1324)

|

Varāha Thakura

|

Bhānukara Thākura

|

Maho. Prajñākara (or Pagū) Thākura

|

Ratnākara "Daśāvadhāna" Thākura
(He married his grand-daughter (*i.e.* the daughter of

34. दशावधान ठाकुरस्य (KNP No. 100).

35. This information and the geneologies given has been kindly communicated to me by Pandit Ramanatha Jha from Pañji.

Maho, Rameśvara) to Rāmacandra Jha of the family of Pabaulibāra Baṛhiāma. This Rāmacandra Jha was the son of a cousin of MM. Mahārāja Maheśa Ṭhākura founder of the House of Khandva in Mithilā and that of the famous disciple of the latter, MM. Raghunandana Rāya as well.)

It is clear from the above that the first Daśavadhāna Ṭhākura was possibly a contemporary of Vidyāpati and the second was a contemporary of MM. Mahārāja Maheśa Ṭhākura (c. 1557). There are certain other factors which decide that the former is the Maithili poet. Daśāvadhāna mentions the names of Ālam Shah, Damodara Rāya and Cānda Raya. Now, Ālam Shah has been identified with Alam Shah Sayyid (1444-1451).[36] As regards Dāmodara Rāya all that we can say is that he might be the brother of MM. Maheśa Ṭhākura, but it is not possible to identify at all Cānda Rāya.

From the above any one of the following three facts can be deduced :

(1) Narapati Ṭhākura and Ratnākara Ṭhākura may both have written poems with Daśāvadhāna in the Bhanitā.

(2) Only Narapati Ṭhākura may have written these poems.

(3) Some other Daśāvadhāna Ṭhākura may have written all or some of these poems. This is supported by the reading " दसा वए धनधान " instead of " दसावधान " in one of them.[37]

The most acceptable one of these deductions, in the present state of our knowledge, is the second proposition. Narapati Ṭhākura contemporary of Vidyāpati and Ālam Shah is perhaps

36. JBORS XXVIII, pt. iv., p. 426.

37. N. G. 120.

the poet known as Daśavadhāna Thākura. We cannot help recalling here that the name of one of Vidyāpati's sons was Narapati Thākura.

The following specimen is quoted to show that he wrote well above the average contemporary of Vidyāpati:

उपरे पयोधर नखरेख सुन्दर मृगमद पङ्के लेपला ।
जनि सुमेरु शशिखण्ड उदित भेल जलधरजालें झाँपला ॥
अभिरानि है कपट करह कौं लागी ।
कोन पुरुष गुने लुबुध तोहर मन रयनि गमओलह जागी ॥
काजरे कओने अधर भेल धूसर पुनु कोनें आरत देला ।
बूधक परसें पवार धवल भेल अरुन मजिठ भए गेला ॥
नखि पनारि गजें गंजि नहाओलि परसलि फूल फिरने ।
अइसन देखिअ कपट करह जनु बेकत नुकाओब कओने ॥
दस अवधान भन पुरुष पेम गुनि प्रथम समागम मेला ।
आलम साह प्रभु भाविनि भजि रहु कमलिनि भमर भुलला ॥[38]

9. *Visnupuri*[39]

He is the famous author of ***Bhakti-ratnāvalī.*** It is only recently that finally the correct family history of the poet has been determined. He flourished in the middle of the 15th century. He was born in the family of Karmahā Taraunī. His grand-father was Śrīdhara, and father Ratidhara. He was known as Rāmapati or Ramapati before he took Sannyāsa. He travelled widely and his great work which was originally written in Sanskrit was translated

38. RT p. 86.

39. N No. 60. Bhanita has विष्णुपुरी कह. See *Patna University Journal* Vol. I No. 2 pp 7 to 20: "Paramahansa Viṣṇupurī—His identity and Age". Other articles on him are in *Hindustānī* (VIII, i) by Mañjulal Majumdar; D. C. Sen's *Chaitanya and His Contemporaries*; Buchanan · Assamese "Sankara Charitra" of Rāmacharan Mishra and *Indian Culture* Vol.

into Bengali by Lauria Kṛṣṇadāsa in about 1487.

10. *Yasodhara "Nava-kavisekhara*[40]
and
11. *Kavisekhara*[41]

The poem attributed to Yaśodhara in *Rāgataraṅginī* makes him call himself "Nava-Kaviśekhara".[42] The adjective "Nava" is not found in another poem which is ascribed to one Kaviśekhara (Yasodhara ?). Now, this latter poem refers to one Nasarat Shah and the poem with "Nava-Kaviśekhara-Yaśodhara" in the Bhanitā refers to one Husain Shah. These two patrons—Nasarat Shah and Husain Shah—appear to be successive rulers. Their identification has been :

Either (1) *with the rulers of Jaunpur*[43]—Nasiruddin Mahmud (1422-1454) and Husain Shah (1457-1491).

Or, (2) *with the rulers of Bengal*[44]—Husain Shah (1493-1519) and Nasarat Shah (1519-1531).

The two Bengal rulers are known to have been great patrons of learning ; even Bābar, the first Moghul Emperor of India, testifies to Nasarat Shah's patronage. There is some difficulty in identifying the patron of Kaviśekhara with Nasiruddin Mahmud of Jaunpur—his name is much different from what appears

40. One poem in RT p 67.

41. भनइ जसोधर नव कविशेखर पुहवी तेसर काँहाँ ।
साह हुसेन भृङ्ग सम नागर, मालति सेनिक ताँहाँ ॥ (RT p. 67

42. Ibid.

43. This is MM Haraprasada Śāstrī's view ; see also JBORS XXVIII pt. 4, 422.

44. This is Nagendranatha Gupta's view. See also JBORS, Ibid.

in the poem, *i. e.*, "Nasarat Shāh." It is, therefore, possible that Kaviśekhara flourished under the patronage of the two Bengal rulers.

Yaśodhara is likely to be the same as Yaśodharopādhyāya quoted by Narasimha Thākura (c. 1612) in his *Narasimhamaniṣā*,[45] a commentary on *Kávyaprakáśa*. He is there referred to as an old commentator or *Kávyaprakáśa*. This agrees with the date of Navakaviśekhara. We have some Sanskrit verses from one of his namesakes in *Vidyákarasáhasrakam*[46] who is distinguished as the 'new' Yaśodhara.

In the present state of our knowledge, all that can be definitely asserted is that Yaśodhara Navakaviśekhara flourished in about 1493-1531, and that the poet who calls himself merely as 'Kaviśekhara' or 'new Nakaviśekhara'[47] may be the same as Yaśodhara.

His poems are well above the average. The following is quoted as a specimen :

तोहँ हमँ पेम बतँ दुरँ उपजल, सुमरवि से परिपाटी ।
श्रावे पर रमनि रसुरस भुलला है, कओन कला हमें बाँटी ॥
भमर बर मोरे बोले बोलब कन्हाइ ।
बिरहतन्त बदि बान मनोभव, की फल अधिक जनाइ ॥

45. Introduction to *Kávyaprakáśa*, along with Bhaṭṭavāmāchārya's Balbodhinī Tīka, p. 30 (Bombay Edition). The date of Narasimha is latter half of 17th cen. A. D. because he refers to Kamalākara's views as those of moderns, who is known to have written *Nirṇayasindhu* in 1612. (Krishnamachari, *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 758 and p. 762 and Kane, *History of Alankārabaśastra*, p. clxvi).

46. Introduction by Dr. Mishra, p. 11; we know of other Yaśodharas, such as, one of Ghosauta Family, father of Bharata (author of an elementary treatise on Astronomy called *Rasala* MMC III p. 348).

47. "New", perhaps because he remembers the old Kaviśekhara, Kaviśekharācarya Jyotirīśvara.

सुविज सुमेरु साजुवन तुलना, सबकाँ महिमा घने ।
कवि निपुणोमें ठाम बदि आइब, गरिमा गहब कओने ॥
पुरुष हृदय बल दुअओ सहबें चल, अनुपबें वाबें थिराइ ।
से बदि न थिर रह सहसें धारें बह, उचे ओ नीच पथे जाइ ॥
भनइ जसोधर नव कविशेखर, पुहवी तेसर काँहाँ ।
साह हुसेन भृङ्ग सम नागर मालति सेनिक्र ताँहाँ ॥ [48]

12. *Rájapındita* [49]

He folurished under one Dhanyamānika: who has been identified[50] with the 150th king of Tripurā who ruled from 1439 to 1515 and who invited expert singers and musicians from Mithilā to his kingdom. Of course, elsewhere Rājapaṇḍita may be only a title of a court poet; note also Vidyāpati's copperplate grant of Bisphi wherein he is called Mahārājapaṇḍita.

13. *Oatura Oaturbhuja* [51]

We know of three Oaturbhujas who were Maithils. The first is the author of a Sanskrit Kāvya, *Harioarita*, which is written in imitation of Srīharṣa's *Naısadhaoaritra*, delineating the adventures of Kṛṣṇa. The extant MS of the work is in Maithilākṣara in the hand of Bhānukara (? Bhānu Kavi) of Śāke 144? (*i.e.*,

48. RT p. 67.

49. One poem in N, No. 30 with the Bhanıtā "राजपण्डि कवि कमलाक मनरसिया धन्यमानिक जान" and published by N. G. as Pada 509.

50, JBORS XXVIII, iv p. 408 f. n., on the basis of *Râjamâlâ*, a Bengali work.

51. Twelve poems in KNP. The Bhanitās are: चतुर चतुरभुज (and चतुरभुज merely) in Nos. 11, 9, 99, 108, 132, 133, 143, 144, 145; रसमय चतुर चतुरभुज No. 10; and [illegible] चतुरभुज No. 138.

about 1518 A. D.).[52] There is a later poet called Caturbhuja but he was called Caturbhuja Rāya.[53] A third Caturbhuja is the copyist of a MS. of Vācaspati's *Suddhinirnaya* in 511 La. Sam. (1630 A.D.)[54]

We do not know if the former Caturbhuja was called 'Catura' and if so, why. But his love for writing on Kṛṣṇa theme confirms the impression that he is the vernacular poet Caturbhuja. He appears to have been a fairly popular poet and composed several poems on 'Kṛṣṇa' legends.

14. *Madhusudana*[54]

We know of several Madhusūdanas in Medieval Mithilā: 1. Madhusūdana the compiler-poet of the drama called *Mahānāṭaka* of Hanūmān.[55] 2. Then, there is Madhusūdana, the son of Padmanābha of the Ujaṭi-Kula and a compiler-poet of the work called *Anyopadeśaśatakam.*[56] 3. The third Madhusūdana is the copyist of the MS. of *Tippanaka* in 476 La. Sam.

52. *Nepal Cat,* Preface p. xxxiii and pp. 75 and 134

Muṇḍa Ācārya
|
Divākara Ācārya
|
His descendant Nityānada Kavīndra
|
His descendant author of "Smṛti Kaumudī"
|
His son Śivadāsa
|

Nārāyaṇa Miśra	Mādhava Pāṭhaka	Bhānu Śarma	Caturbhuja

53. VIDYĀKARA pp. 7,18.
54. RT p. 102.
55. MMC II pt. 3, p. 110.
56. Ibid p. 3.

(=1595 A. D.)[57] 4. A brother of Devanatha Thākura (c. 1529) the Tantrika and Govinda Thākura the commentator of *Kávyaprakása*, was also known as Madhusūdana.[58] 5. Fifthly, we know Madhusudana, the author of *Jyotisa-pradípánkura* and *Bhavaprakása*, two manuals of Jyotiṣa.[59] He was the son of Narasiṁha and grand-son of Nāgeśvara of the family of Māṇḍara. "He had three brothers Govinda, Narahari and Vāmadeva and he wrote under king Dhīrasiṁha of Tīrabhukti (Tirhut) his astronomical work *Joitisapradípánkura*." He lived, therefore, in the first half of the 15th century. 6. Lastly, there is Madhusudana Thākura the famous Naiyāyika who seems to have lived prior to 1610.[60]

It is very difficult to say which of these Madhusudanas is the Maithili poet Madhusudana. There is no clue in the Bhanitā of his single extant poem which may help us to determine anything definitely. His date ranges between 1446 and 1529/1610.[60]

15. *Jívanátha.*[61]

He refers to one Rūpanarāyaṇa husband of Medhādevī in one of his poems. This Rūpanārāyaṇa may be any one of the following:

57. MMC II.

58. MMC II Intr. p. 7 (Ms dated c. 476 L. S.=1595 A. D.).

59. SINGH p. 146-147; Aufrecht, *Cat. Catalogorum* II p. 97 (b) and MMC III p. 274-5.

60. MMC I. There is one more Madhusūdana, brother of Pītāmbara Śarma, Vidyānidhi (about 1680) OCP XII p. 318.

61. The Bhanitā of his poem is:

दान कलपतरु मेदिनि मधवतरु नृप हिन्दू सुलताने ।
मेधा देइ पति रूपनराएन प्रबधि जीवनाथ भाने (हे) ॥

(RT p. 112).

(a) Mahārāja Śivasiṁha "Rūpanārāyaṇa" (1413-1416). One of his queens was known as Medhā See Dr. U. Mishra's *Vidyāpati* (2nd Edn.), p. 26. (b) Moraṅga-Rājā Rūpanārāyaṇa (see below).[62] (c) Mahārāja Rāmabhadra Siṁha "Rūpanārāyaṇa" (1482?-1496?) (c) Khanāla-Rājā Rūpanārāyana[63] (d) Rājā of Tripurā.[64] It is probable that the poet was a contemporary of Mahārāja Śivasiṁha.

16. *Lachamīnárāyana*[65] (*Lakṣmīnātha-nārāyana*?).

17. *Gopīnātha.*[66] 18. *Vīranārāyana*[67]

19. *Dhīreśvara*[68]

20. *Bhīsma Kavi.*[69]

21. *Gangādhara.*[70]

From the Bhanitās of the poems of the

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62. See below, p. 216.

63. See tha family tr e of Khanāla Brāhmaṇas prepared by Badrīnātha Jha in *Kāśyapakulapraśasti*, 1938. See below f. n. No. 74.

64. *Hindi Viśvakośa* by N N. Vasu.

65. KT. p 65. The Bhanitā runs :

लछमिनराएन नृप कह, तोंहे गुनमति नारि ।

बासओ नेह बढावह, सैहे देव मुरारि ॥

Another poem in KNP (No. 84) refers to a peet called Gopīnātha under him. Grierson says in *Vernacular Lit. of Hindustan* p. 40 "fl 1600 A D" There is also one Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa, author of *Laghu Sangraha* a Jyotiṣa work, MMO III p. 374.

66. KNP No. 84 गोपीनाथ सुकवि भन अइसन बिसवाद से बहि विधि—लखिमीनराएन नरपति रस बुझ ।

67. KNP No. 53.

68. No. 260 नरनरावन नागरा कवि धीरेसर भाने (Printed by N. G. as No. 43)

69. Two poems in RT—

(१) हरिहर मनविद भीषम भान ।
प्रभावति पति जगनरायन जान ॥ (p. 43).

(२) हरि...सखि धरि कवि भीषम एहो भाने ।
प्रभावति देह पति मोरंग महपति नृप जगनराएन जाने ॥ (p. 58).

One poem in KNP No. 11.

(१) कवि भीषम प्रभावतीपति मोरंग महिपति-नृप जगनराएन जान ॥

70. RT p. 78.

above poets it is clear that they all flourished at the court of Moranga Rājās. Moranga is on the northern boundary of Mithilā, hence it was quite natural that Maithila scholars should seek patronage there. It is one of the Maithili speaking districts in Nepal kingdom. we know of one Murāri Miśra (Early 16th Century)"[71] who lived there and who gives a detailed genealogy of the Rājās in his famous Sanskrit work *Subhakarmanirnaya*"[72]

71. *Murārestṛtīyah Panthāh* by Dr. U. Mishra (OCP V). He calls himself a disciple of Keśava Miśra the grandson of Vacaspati Miśra II who fourished during 1450-90.

72. MMC I p. 450-451; also published from Benares pp 1-2. There is an almost parallel geneology given by Badarīnātha Jha in the family tree of Khauāla Brāhmaṇas of Mithilā; Nāthū Śarmā who acquired village Oini → Atirūpa Thākura → Viśvarūpa Thākura → Govinda Thākura → Lakṣmaṇa Thākura →

1. Siddha Kāmeśvara → Bhavasimha → Oinivārā Dynasty.

2 Harṣana → Śivaiśarnā → Kumāra Prabhākara → Raja Ratnākara → Kumāra Matikara → Maha. Harisimha → Raja Rāmacndra → Raja Pratāpa-Nārayaṇa → Raja Kirttinārayaṇa → Rāja Rudra-nārayaṇa → Rājā Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa* → Rājā Rūpanārāyaṇa* →

1. Rājā Phattenārāyaṇa → Rājā Giridharanārā-yaṇa → Raja Śrīdhara Nārāyaṇa

2. Babu Jagannārāyaṇa → Babu Dorddaṇḍa-nārāyaṇa → Babu Kanhaiyānārāyaṇa → Babu Khoṭanārayaṇa →

i. Indranārāyaṇa → Śrī Śivanārāyaṇa.

ii. Bodhanārāyaṇa.

iii. Śrī Kuśanārāyaṇa.

They are now probably petty Zamindars of Sugona near Rajnagar Railway Station O.T.R.

Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa
|
Rūpanārāyaṇa
|
Vīranārāyaṇa
|
Naranārāyaṇa
|
Jagannārāyaṇa
|
Trivikrama-nārāyaṇa
|
Nirbhayanārāyaṇa (contemporary of the above Murāri Miśra)

Now, Lachamīnārāyaṇa (? Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa)[73] may be identified with the first Moraṅga King, or with a contemporary ruler of Vihāranagarī. It is not possible to identify him with Lakṣmīnātha Kaṁsanārāyaṇa or Lakhiminātha. Gopīnātha Kavi[74] too seems to have flourished under this very king—only, instead of Lachamināṛāyaṇa he is called Lakhimanaraen.

Vīranārāyaṇa may be the successor of Rūpanārāyaṇa or he may be the same poet as Vīranārāyaṇa who wrote *Vidyāvilāpa* under Trailokyamalla, ruler of Nepal from 1572 to 1586.

Dhīreśvara flourished under Naranārāyaṇa, who is obviously to be identified with the father of Jagannārāyaṇa as the fourth Moraṅga kinga.[75] The name Dhīreśvara is very familiar

73. There is also one King called Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa father of Vīranārāyaṇa, and grandfather of Prāṇanārāyaṇa and of his sister Rūpamatī whose capital was at Vihāranagarī The husband of Rūpamatī, Pratāpamalla, is known to have defeated Siddhinarasingha and others of Nepal (c. 1637-49) Grierson also mentions this name in *Vernacular Lit. of Hindustan.*

74. See above f. n. 66.

75. Of course, we know of one more Maithila King, of Oinivara Dynasty—Viśvanātha *alias* Naranārāyaṇawhoe was the grandson of Narasiṁha Darpanārāyaṇa and th son of Durlabhanārāyana. See SINGH.

to students of this period, but we cannot say who is our poet. He cannot be Vidyāpati's ancestor or Jyotirīśvara's ancestor because he appears to have dedicated his services to Moraṅga court, nor can he be possibly Dhīreśvara the ancestor of Viṣṇupurī.

Bhiṣma Kavi is the most important of this group of poets in Moraṅga. He refers to Jagannārāyaṇa. In another poem the Bhanita has "Kumara Bhīkhama" as the author and Naranārāyaṇa husband of Dharmādevī as the patron. There is every possibility that this poet is identical with Kavi Bhīṣma, for Naranārāyaṇa is the name of Jagannārāyaṇa's father. Of course, the adjective 'Kumara' indicates that he was also possibly a scion of a royal family.

There is great mastery of rhythm in his lines. The following poem is quoted as a specimen :

ससधर सहस सार बटुराव
तैश्रश्रो न बदन पटान्तर पाव ।
॥ ध्रुवम् ॥ देख देख आइ, सरगक सरवस उरवसि जाइ ॥
बिविध बिलोकन अति अभिराम
.मनहु न अवतर नयन उपाम ॥
निक निक मानिक अरुनिम जोति
सहजे धवल देखिअ गजमोति ॥
जातररात मजलँ अतिसेत
ऐसन दसन तुलना के हेत ॥
कांचिक रचि रोमावलि भास
उपरँ तरल हरावली फास ॥
कर कौशल मनमय मन लए
कुचसिरिफल नहिं होअए नवाए ॥
करि–कर उरु उपमा नहि पाव
अपनहिं लाजँ संकोच नुकाव ॥

हरिहर प्रनविए भीषम भान,
प्रभावति पति गगनराघव बान ॥ [76]

Gangadhara flourished under the patronage of Trivikrama Nārāyaṇa, who may be identified with Trivikrama-Nārāyaṇa the Moraṅga king or with Trvikrama patron of one Gaṅgā-Viṣṇu, author of *Ācāradīpaka* (1752).[77] The extant song of Gaṅgādhara is an excellent prayer to Durgā.

22. *Lakhiminātha*[78]

Lakṣmīnātha was one of the most popular poets of Mithilā. It is, however, very difficult to fix his date with any definiteness. For there were several famous persons of this name in Mithilā. Secondly, there are several obvious differences in the available Bhaṇitās. From the poem in the "RAJ LIBRARY MS" he is known to be the court poet of a ruler called "Kṛṣṇanārāyaṇa" (?), but in a poem in the "KAMSA-NĀRĀYAṆA-PADĀVALI", the expression "Lakhiminathanaresa"[79] seems to indicate that the poet was himself a ruler. It seems to me

76. RT, p. 42-3.

77. *Nepal Cat.* p. 153

78. Poems with Lakhiminatha in the Bhaṇitā :
    (1) KNP No. 33, 36, 103
    (2) N. No. 103 (published by N.G. Pada 163) should it be spelt as Laṣimīnātha ? Vide JGJRI, II p. 403.

Poems with Lakhiminatha and patron's name in the Bhaṇitā .

(3) RAJA LIBRARY MANUSCRIPT, No. 1.

लखिमिनाथ कह भानिसार, सब तह भल रस सिङ्गार ।
"कृष्णनराजेन" गुणक गेह, देवजना सेवि नव सिनेह ॥

(4) KNP No. 51.

लखिमिनाथ नरेस सोरम देवि नायक बन......

79. KNP No 51, quoted in F. N. 78 above.

that the two names refer to at least two poets—one, the ruler called Lakṣmīnātha and the other the court poet La(k)ṣ(i)mīnātha (pronounced Lakhimīnātha).

It is not difficult to identify the ruler Lakhimīnātha with Lakṣmīnātha the last of the Oinivāra kings who bore the title Kaṁsa-nārāyaṇa as will be clear from the subsequent pages.

* The date of the court poet Lakhimī(i)nātha may be known if we can rightly identify his patron. Unfortunately we do not know any ruler in Mithilā who was known directly as Kṛṣṇanārāyaṇa. There is a possibility that by "Kṛṣṇanārāyaṇa" he may refer to Dhīrasiṁha (c. 1440) who was known invariably as "Hari-nārāyaṇa" in his later years. Indeed, he (or his brother Bhairavasiṁha) was alternatively called "ripurāja-kaṁsa-dalana-nārāyaṇa". We do not know if he ever had a queen called "Devajanā" (See also one Kṛṣṇanārāyaṇa husband of Kamalāvatī just below). We know of one Lakṣmīnātha Datta who copied a Sanskrit work *Saṁvatsara-pradīpa* in Śāke 1487 (1565 A.D.).[80] But he cannot solve the difficulty.

23. *Syāmasundara*[81]

Under the patronage of a "Kṛṣṇanārāyaṇa" husband of Kamalāvatī Devī, another poet named Syama-Sundara also flourished.

80. *Nep, Cat.*, p. 60.

81. The Bhanita of his solitary poem : रसमय स्यामसुन्दर कवि गाव । सकल अधिक भेल मन्मथ भाव ॥ कृष्णनरायन ई रस जान । कमलावति पति गुनक निधान ॥ (RT p. 115). Note that Kamalāvatī occurs as the name of the queen of Arjuna Raya (S), and also that of the patron of Govinda author of नलचरित नाट described below (in Part III ch. VIII) ; see also f.n. below 85.

24. *Kamsanárdyana* (? 1496-1527) [82]

He was the greatest patron of Maithili song after the great Śivasiṁha. He patronised several poets and was himself a poet. I have found a whole Padāvalī after his name—containing most of the favourite poems of his court. In one of his songs he refers to a 'Nasirā' Shah who may be identical with Nasarat Shah of Bengal (1518-31), son of Husain Shah, the conqueror of Mithila who practically brought Oinivāra dynasty to a close [83]

"Kamsanṛpati" [84] is perhaps a variant of 'Kaṁsanārāyaṇa' the title of this royal poet.

It is remarkable how glorious an Age Maithili lyric had at the court of Kaṁsanārāyaṇa. Fortunately, we are able to have a glimpse into it when we look to the following names:

25. *Govinda* [85]

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82. Poems with Kaṁsanārayaṇa in the Bhaṇitā:

(१) KNP No. 41 कंस नराएन only

(२) N. No. 59 कंस नराएन गाविहा रे (Pab. as N. G. 479).

(३) RT p. 77 कंस नरायन कौतुक गावे

(४) RT p. 97 सुमुखि समाद सभादरँ समदल नसिरा साह सरताने।

नासिरा भूपति सोरमपति कंसनराएन भाने ॥

And see also f. n. below Nos. 85, 86, 87, 88. His queens' name given usually as Soramadevi.

83. See SINGH, p. 80.

84. Bhanitā in N, No. 41 (quoted by N.G. as pada 708): कंस नृपति भन merely.

85. There is at least one more poet Govindadāsa and one more Govinda, the dramatist, to be discussed later

26. *Kāśināthā*[86]

27. *Rāmanāthā*[87]

28. *Śrīdhara*[88]

'Govinda' was as intimately connected with Kaṁsanārāyaṇa as the poet Vidyāpati was

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on. There are several poems available with the following Bhaṇitās :

(*a*) Poems which mention Govinda, Kaṁsanārāyaṇa and/or Soramadevi :

(१) KNP No. 55 गोविन्द भन बुझ कंस नराएन सोरम देवी अनुरागी

(२) KNP No. 57 गोविन्द भन मती कंसनराएन सोरम देवी समाज

(३) KNP No. 79 गोवन्द सोरम रमन कंसनराएण मीलत नन्द कुमारे

(४) KNP No. 107 सोरमरमन एहो रस जान कंसनाराएन गोविन्द भान

(५) KNP No. 12' कंसनराएन गोवीन्द

(६) RT p. 101 सोरम रमन कंसनारएन मिलत नन्द कुमारे It is not clear if the poem is by Govinda or by Kaṁsa-nārāyaṇa)

(७) RT p. 102 दास गोविन्द भन कंसनराएन सोरमदेवि समाज ॥

(*b*) Poems which mention only 'Govinda' or 'Kavi Govinda' :

(८) KNP No. 72, 99, 146, 136.

(*c*) Poems which mention Vasudeva as Govinda's patron :

(९) KNP No. 12 गोविन्द भन अरविन्द देवी कमला रमण रसबुझ वासुदेव नरेस See above f. n. 81.

86. KNP No. 50 काशीनाथ रमभए कन्सनराएण बुझ पेम etc.

87. KNP No. 98 सोरम रमन सकल रसबिन्दक रामनाथ कवि भानए रे.

88. N. No. 146 कवि सिरिधर हेन भान कंसनराएन नृपवर मोर (सोरम ?) देवि रमनि and *Vidyāvinodanāṭakatantra* राजा श्री फीरोजशाह जाने द्विज श्रीधर कविराज परमाने ।

with Maharaja Śivasiṁha. He also refers to one "Vasudeva Naresa" in one of his poems.[89] Probably this Vasudeva is the same person as Vasudeva patron of Gonṛhi Miśra (contemporary of Maharaja Ramabhadrasiṁhadeva 1482?-1496 ?)[90] The date of Govinda is thus fairly certain: round about ? 1482-1527.

There is, however, a great difficulty in identifying him. The name Govinda has been a very common name in Mithila and it had many an illustrious bearer. Chief among them are these :

(a) MM Govinda Thakkura who was a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa[91] and the writer of a highly praised commentary of *Kávya-Prakáśa*, called *Kávya-Pradípa*. His son Devanatha Thakura wrote 'Mantra Kaumudī' a Tantra work, in 410 La. Saṁ. (1529 A.D)[92] MM Govinda Thakkura was son of Keśava Thakura and Sono Devī and lived in village Bhaḍaura.[93] (b) Govindadasa, the great Maithila poet who was a contemporary of Maharaja Sundara Thakura. (c) Govinda author of *Nalacaritanáta*. About these two authors more information will be given later. (d) Govinda (ancestor of Vidyapati) author of *Pújápradípa*. (e) Govinda, the author of one of the most beautiful Maheśavaṇīs :

माइ हे, उमत बमाए के करू। भ्रुव
बाघ छाल पहिरन, कलित भुजगतन

89. KNP No. 12.

90 MMC. I pp. 454 and R. Jha "Declaration of a Śarayantrī" OCP XII.

91. There is a famous legend about him given in the Introduction to his *Kâvyapradîpa*, Benares edition. Govinda the author of *Govinda tattvanirṇaya* (Nepal Cat. p. 17-18) may be identified with MM Govinda Thakura.

92. MMC II, Intr., p. 4.

93. Introduction to *Kâvyapradîpa*, Benares Edition, p. 11.

के परिहुए, छूबि देखि डरू ।
उचित न बिहि तोहि, की देखि लिखल मोहि
गौरि कुमारि रहु बरू ।
धन सम्पति घर, एको न थीक हर
किअ लए धैरज मन धरू ।
ललित गौरि छवि, भनथि गोविन्द कवि
लोचन निरखि नीर भरू ॥[94]

Perhaps this Govinda flourished *after* 17th century. (*f*) MM Govinda whose Ms. is noted in *Nepal Cat.* (La. Saṁ. 52?/641?),(Same is 'a' ?)[95] (*g*) Govinda who flourished in 1525 Śāke=1603 A.D.[96]

It is most probable that our poet Govinda is the same as the famous scholar MM Govinda Thakkura.

Govinda shows great felicity of expression and command over language.

Kāśīnātha is difficult to indentify. We do know of one Brāhmaṇa Kaśīnātha the author of a Sanskrit work, *Yaduvaṁsa-Kávya*[97] His father was Śaṅkara and his mother Rohiṇī. But there is no certainty if he is the vernacular poet too.

Rāmanātha does not expressly mention the name of Kaṁsanārāyaṇa as his patron. He, however, refers to the latter's favourite queen Sorama and his poem is found in the Anthology

94. Quoted by Dinabandhu Jha *Mithilabhāṣā Vidyotana*, p. 279. He may be the 19th Century Maithili poet famous for his Maheśavanīs. See him below in Part III of this work. The poem in full has been supplied to me by Pt. Dinabandhu Jha.

95. p. 18.

96. MMC III p. 2.

97. *Nepal Cat.* p. 232.

containing poems popular in the Age of Kaṁsanārāyaṇa.

Srīdhara calls himself a contemporary of Firoz Shah [98] (Firoz Tughlak ?) in a Maithili work of his the Vidyāvinoda nāṭaka-tantra preserved in Rajaguru Hemraja's library. He may be identified with either the ancestor of Viṣṇupuri [99] or with Tarkkācārya Thakkura, author of a commentary on *Kávyaprakása*—one of the extant Mss. which is dated La. Saṁ. 291 (1410 A. D.) when Devasiṁha and Śivasiṁha were ruling over Mithila. [100]

Conclusion

The downfall of the Oinivāra Dynasty was a landmark in the history of Mithila. It marked the passing away of an illustrious court. Kaṁsanārāyaṇa was the last king and with his death the centre of literary activity was disrupted for a number of years.

The Oinivāra Dynasty left an indelible mark on the history of Maithili literature. It produced at least six prominent poets, *viz.*, Vidyāpati, Amṛtakara, Caturbhuja, Govinda, Bhiṣma, and Kaṁsanārāyaṇa. The kings of the dynasty were as much interested in the cultivation of learning and the arts as their queens, other relatives, and the courtiers. Almost every one who was important in public life, encouraged Vernacular poets. We have the evidence of the famous king Sivasiṁha and his consort Lakhimā, Padmasiṁha and his queen Viśvāsa Devī, Candra Siṁha and his wife, and various others—as to how friendly and enthusiastic they were in the company

98. *Vidyāvinodanāṭakatantra* (Containing 94 Songs) in the Library of Hemraj Sharma, Nepal. Cat. No. 2 Kha.

99. *Patna University Journal* I No. 2 p. 13.

100. SINGH p. 71.

of eminent men of letters. Kaṁsanārāyaṇa's Age marked a high water mark in this tradition. It seems that he was responsible for great literary activity during his reign. His own name appears in the Bhanitās of several poems as a poet and his relations with Govinda appear to be as close and intimate as those of Śivasiṁha and Vidyāpati.

Throughout this period there is outspoken imitation of the writings of the great poet Vidyāpati. Almost all poets wrote on Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's love sports, or on love in general, on Gaṅgā, Śiva and Śakti. They arouse the same kind of emotions with the help of similar imagery as Vidyāpati. Rarely do we come across a poet who shows any distinctive method or technique. They have, however, always great felicity of language, musical rhythm and sweet lilt.

The downfall of Oinivāra Dynasty was followed by great political uneasiness and dislocation in the administrative machinery of the country. From about 1527 to 1557 when the new Dynasty was founded by Mahārāja Maheśa Thākura, there was a break in the literary activity of Mithila. The centre of gravity shifted to Nepal where the royal courts had, by force of circumstances, come to patronise Maithila intelligentsia. That is why the next section of Vidyāpati's successors is made up mostly of Nepāli writers. It does not mean that there was no poet in Mithila proper immediately after 1527, but the paucity of their number is remarkable as contrasted with that which preceded 1527 or which succeeded 1557.

III

SUCCESSORS OF VIDYAPATI (c. 1527-c.1700)

Before we examine the poets who belong to this group, it must be pointed out that this

section properly belongs to the III Part of the present work. We are considering these poets here for the sake of convenience merely.

In Mithila

1. *Haridása*[101]

Haridāsa is a very common name in Brajabūlī literature.[102] But our Haridāsa is perhaps Haridāsa brother of the famous poet Govindadāsa (c. 1643-1670). His only extant poem is a simple and charming Nacārī :

देखहो गे माइ हे जोगि एतए कतए ।
फिरए गोरी रँगे जतए ततए ॥
सिंगी भरि पुरलन्हि मधुरिमि बानी ।
भिखिओ न लेअ जोगी माँगइ भवानी ॥
जहाँ जहाँ सखि सँङ्ग गोरि खेलाए ।
तहाँ तहाँ नाचए जोगी डामरू बजाए ॥
जोगिआ रंगिआ नितैं नितैं आव ।
परतह कह जोगि गोरि देखाव ॥
भन हरिदास महादेव मेस ।
गोरी भाग गङ्गाराम महेश ॥[103]

2. *Maheśa Thákura* (1556-1569)[104]

With the establishment of the new Dynasty in Mithilā in about 1557, we have once again a stable court patronizing learning and poetry, though it was after some time that the glory that was associated with the Maithila courts could be fully revived. Mahārāja Maheśa Thakura the founder of the new Dynasty was himself

101. RT p. 61-62.

102. Dr. Sukumara Sen *History of Brajabūlī Literature* p. 436.

103. RT p. 61-62.

104. Four poems in Cetantha Jha's Introduction to his edition of Umāpati's *Pārijātaharaṇa* pp. 6-9 and BAKHŚI.

interested in his mother-tongue, unlike other great scholars of his day. After his abdication in about 1569, he passed the evening of his life at Kāśi on the banks of Gangā. There he is said to have composed the famous hymns on Gangā and Tārā. It is noteworthy how direct and simple his expression is. A scholar of the first rank, engaged in the study most abstruse of all Systems of Indian Philosophy, when he had to say something in his mother-tongue to give vent to some of his highest feelings he could not help himself—he breaks the sophisticated and over-wrought phraseology of Vidyāpati's tradition :

उधारिब अधम जन जानि ॥ (ध्रुवम्) ॥
हम बनिजार पाप बटवार, सुकृत बेसाहल सुरसरिधार ॥
जेहि खन देखल धवल जलधार, जीवन जन्म सुफल संसार ॥
सीकर निकर परस यदि मेले, मन अनुताप पाप दुरि गेले ॥
जे सब उधारल से मोर आधे, कहु मोर सुरसरि की अपराधे ॥
भनथि महेश नमित कै शीश, तोंह करुणानिधि हम निरदीश ॥ [105]

3. *Bhagiratha Kavi*[106]

We have some poems with Bhagiratha or Bha'ratha in their Bhanitās. They are probably by the same man. He refers to Mānasingh (died 1618) as his patron. Mānasingh was the famous general of Akbar, at first on the Kabul Frontier and subsequently in Behar. Grierson says of Mānasingh :

> He was "a great patron of learned men and used to give............poets, a lakh of rupees for a single verse."[107]

105. Ibid.

106. KNP No. 146 कवि भगीरथ हेन भाने सकल बाचकाती । नृप मानसिंहपती etc.

KNP No. 117 मानसिंह महीपति (Patron's name) and KNP No. 46 भ(गी ?)रथ कवि

107. Grierson *Vernacular Literature of Hindustan*.

The date of Mānasingh coincides with that of Bhagīratha Thākura (or Megha Thākura), brother of Mahārāja Maheśa Thākura. It is, therefore, possible to indentify Bhagıratha Kavi with Bhagīratha Thakura and place him in the second half of the sixteenth century.

4. *Mhinátha Thákura*[108] (1559/71 1690/93?)

5. *Locana*[109]

Locana is the Herald of a new age since the down-fall of the court of Kaṁsanārāyaṇa. By his time, the court of the new dynasty had established for itself once more the traditional reputation of Maithila courts as centres of Literature and art. Mahārāja Mahınātha Thākura was interested in vernacular composition as is evinced by his devotional song in praise of Kālı composed in 1601 on the occasion of the departure of his younger brother, Narpati Thākura, to subdue certain turbulent chiefs. It is quoted below to indicate the depth of Mahinātha Thākura's feeling and sincerity of his emotions:

बदन भयान वग(द ?)न शव कुण्डल विकट दशन घन पाँती ।
फूजल केश मेश ब्रुम्र के कह जनि नव जलधर काँती ॥
काटल माथ हाथ अति शोभित तीक्ष्ण खड्ग कर लाई ।
भय निर्भय वर दहिन हाथ लए रहिय दिगम्बरि माई ॥
पीन पयोधर उपर राजित लिधुर श्रवित मुण्ड हारा ।
कटि किङ्किणि शव कर कर मण्डित सृक बह शोनित धारा ॥
वसिय मशान ध्यान शव उपर योगिनिगण रहु साथे ।
नरपति पति राखिय जग ईश्वरि करु महिनाथ सनाथे ॥[110]

108. Cetanatha Jha *op. cit.* p. 10-11 and BAKHŚI quote the same poem.

109. RT 8 songs pp. 41, 43, 45, 46, 48, 50, 84 100. Notable Bhanitās are : लोचन . रुकिमिनि पति भान (p. 44) and लोचन... मधुमति पति महिनाथ महीपति (p. 45, 46, 84) डरपथि मनरञ्जक नृप नरपति रसभान (p. 48, 50).

110. See f. n, 108 above.

It was in the courts of Mahınatha Thākura and his brother Narapati Thākura that Maithilı lyric once again rose to glory. Narapatı Thākura was an expert in music and particularly loved 'Dhuni' (Dhvani ?)[111] songs. Locana testifies to his powers and ascribes his own achievement to his patronage and encouragement.

We should, chronologically speaking, discuss Locana, after Govindadāsa, but for the sake of convenience we shall take up Locana first.

In recent years scholars of music have pointed out here and there the importance of Locana as a leading mediaeval authority on Indian music. Among such scholars Bhatkhande deserves special mention. But a genuine description of the life and works of Locana was not attempted till Nagendranatha Gupta used Locana's famous work, *Rága-Tarangini* as a source of Vidyāpati's Poems (1910) Meanwhile, Pandit Dattātreya Keshab Joshī published from Poona an edition of this wok ın 1918 on the basıs of a manuscript obtained at Allahabad. Mr. Bhāla Chandra Sitarama Sukhathankar is also said to have brought out an edition of it. These editions did not brıng out the vernacular portıons of the work. It was pandit Baladeva Mishra, who edıted and publıshed the complete work for the first time from Raj Press, Darbhanga. It is still necessary to compare all the available editions and their originals to determine finally the authentic character of the text.

Locana was unfortunately regarded as a Bengali for some time. Acarya Kṣhitimohan Sen[112] has discussed the arguments in favour

111. Sınging Dhruva (?) ध्रुनिगान सिन्धु: RT p. 2.

112. He has also discussed ıt in a Bengalı artıcle which was later translated into English in *Vıshwabharatī Quarterly*, 1943-44.

of establishing Locana as a Bengali in an article contributed to the Technical Sciences section of the Twelfth All-India Oriental Conference. Dr. Subhadra Jha in a very full discussion on the "Time and Domicile of Locana" says :

> "The verse (*which is quoted by Mr. Sen from the colophon of the Poona edition to prove that Locana was a Bengali contemporary of Ballâla Sen*) does not refer either to the compilation of the work or its author. It simply means the सप्तर्षि constellation was in विशाखा on the particular day on which Ballala Sen ascended the throne in 1082 of the Śaka era. Had there been any reference to the date of compilation of the book in the Ms of which it has been found, there would have (been) no word like आसन् (were) or there would have been an adverbial word like यदा, तदा to get the verse construde with the line इति लोचनपण्डितविरचिता रागतरङ्गिणी समाप्ता to give an impression that the verse also formed a part of the (*original*) colophon. Therefore, what I think to be right is that this verse was inserted not by Lochana which is not possible to believe, but by some reader or copyist Such addition of irrelevant matters in Sanskrit Mss by later day writers of Mss or readers is not unknown. The late Sir Ganganatha Jha noticed several गौरीवराटिकापत्रs in the Mss of the books on मीमांसा. All that the verse is worth for is that it fixes the date of Ballala's ascending the throne with some certainty, and it has nothing to do with रागतरङ्गिणी."[113]

There is, therefore, no palpable reason to suppose with Acārya K. Sen that

> "Most probably this newly composed book was offered publicly as a suitable present by the court musicians on the auspicious day of Ballala's accession to the throne."[114]

On the contrary, in the manuscript of Pt. Baladeva Mishra's edition the above verse is

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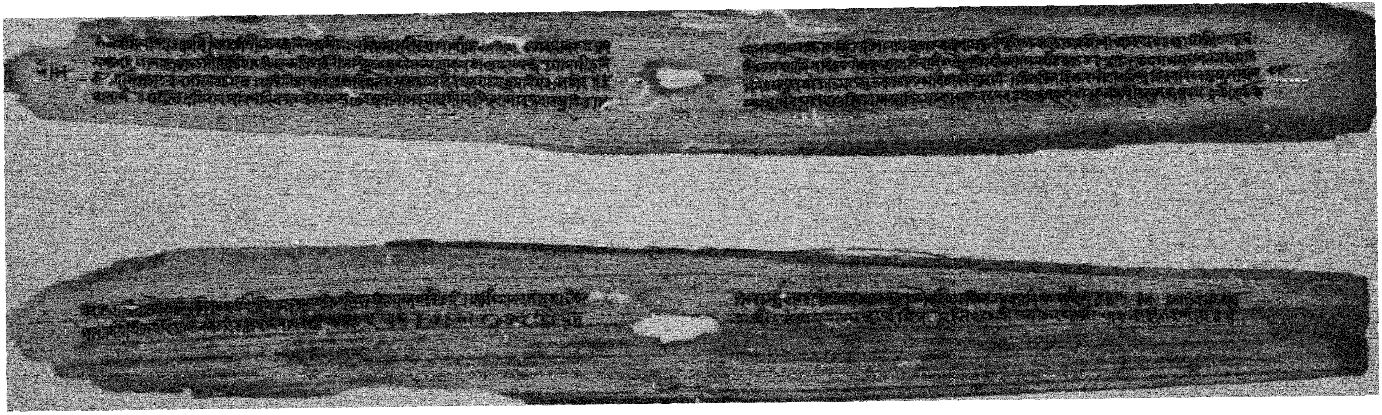
113. "Time and Domicile of Locana, *Patna University Journal* I. ii., p. 38-39.

114. *Vishwabharati Quarterly* 1944, p. 317.

LOCHANA'S HANDWRITING



The Ms of Shriharsha's NAISHADHA copied by Lochana in Shake 1602 (1680 A D)

urtsey the Editor, Mithilamihira

completely absent. It gives several stanzas in praise of the kings of Mithilā from Maheśa Thākura to Mahinātha Thākura under whom Locana compiled the work for the pleasure of the king's brother Narapati Thākura (1673-1690). Besides this, there is a manuscript of *Naiṣadha* copied by Locana dated in 1603 Śake (1681 A.D.).[115] Lastly, the Pañjī contains a full account of the ancestors and desecendants of Locana. It is, therefore, without doubt that Locana belonged to Mithilā and it was he who compiled the famous work on music.

As to his exact date we have the following verse quoted by Candā Jhā from a Ms. in Locana's own hand, which is now lost :

वेद-बाहु-रस-क्ष्माभिर्लक्षिते शाकवत्सरे ।
बुधे भाद्रद्वितीयायां जातमेतत्तु पुस्तकम् ॥
उद्याननगरान्तस्य त्वरितस्य विलेखने ।
देवाह्लस्य प्रतीकस्य लिपिर्लोचनशर्म्मणः ॥[116]

This verse implies that the work was copied in 1702. Another Ms., probably of *Rāga-taraṅgiṇī*, also noticed by Candā Jhā, is dated 1607 Śāke *i.e.* 1685 A.D. which seems to be the date of the composition of the work.

The published family tree of Locana is as follows :—

115. This Ms. is preserved in the Raj Library and a photographic copy of the following line has been reproduced at the end of the Darbhanga edition : शाके १६०३ विजयवत्सरमा रैआमग्रामे स्वार्थमिदमलिखत् श्रीलोचनशर्मा एक ठाकुरवंशीयः ॥ Dr. Subhadra Jha points out that 'Raiama' was wrongly read as 'Udyana' by the editor.

116. Darbhanga edition, Introduction, p. Gha.

Ekahare Kanhaula (Śrotriya).

Vaidyanatha Jha
|
Paramananda Jha
|
Babū Jha
|
MM. Locana Jha

His descendants are living to-day in village, Ujāna, district Darbhanga. It is almost certain that the surname of the original ancestor of Locana was Upādhyāya, not as some people have made out, 'Paṇḍita'. Indeed, from the surname of his present descendants it is likely that Locana was known as Locana Jha.

The place of *Rágataranginí* in the History of Maithila music need not be discussed here. It is enough to note that while this work is valuable in determining the time-limit of many otherwise little or .unknown poets[117] and in helping the building up of a chronological account of Maithili poets, it is an undying record of the wide-spread activity in the music of the day. The work is also an evidence of the greatness of Locana's musical scholarship. He distinguishes the various melodies of the Mithilā school of music with acuemen and tact. Indeed, it appears that he was the first man to finalise the description and definition of Maithila Rāgas and Rāgiṇīs on the basis of chandas (metres). It is hence also his unique contribution to the study of the structure and the prosody of Maithilī lyrics.

Locana was conversant with the language of Madhya Deśa (Hindi) as well as with that of Mithilā. He distinguished the two languages

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117. In all about forty poets are represented in this anthology, including about 45 songs of Vidyāpati and 9 of Locana himself.

in clear terms. He has obviously greater affection for the latter. He considered his own poems in Maithilī as important as those of Vidyāpati. He has quoted Vidyāpati almost invariably followed by his own poems (cf. इति विद्यापतेः । मम तु).

His lyrics are of the usual erotic kind. He does not in any way stand very much high above the ordinary as a poet. The following specimens taken on different topics illustrate his poetic qualities :

(*i*) An 'Abhisārikā' :

आनन्द कन्दा पुनिमक चन्दा मुमुखि वदन तह मन्दा ।
अधरे मधुरी सामरि सुन्दरी विहुसि जितए सित कुसुमसिरी ॥
पथमिललि धनी, दामिनी सनि व्रजराजजनी ।
चिकुर चामरा मुदिर सामरा नलिन नयन सुखकरा ॥
काम रमनी सहिनि तहिनी दसन चमक बनि हीरक (म) नी ।
उकुति वेकती बुझलि जुगुती कामिनि मनावति पती ॥
विजुरि उजरी रजनि गुजरी इति दोसरि अगुसरी ।
'लोचन' बानी सुतनु सयानी कन्त भजलि जलराजमनी ॥[118]

(*ii*) A Hymn to Śakti:

जय जय जय नत सतत सिवङ्करि परिहित नरसिरमाले ।
लम्बित रसनि दसन अति भीषन वसन मिलल बघ छाले ॥
चौदिसँ मानुस मॉसु मुदित अति फेरु फूकर कत रासे ।
मनिमय विविध विभूषने मण्डित वेंदि विदित तुअवासे ॥
भूत परेत पिशाच निसाचर अगनित जोगिनि जाले ।
जसने न जगत जननि तुअ संगति तहें न कहिअ कोन काले ॥
बिमल बालरविमण्डल सनतुअ तीन नयन परगासे ।
असुरसहिर मदिरामद मातलि वदन अमिअ समहासे ॥
तुअ अनुरूप सरूप बुझिअ नहि तैअओ तोहर गुनगाऊ ।
जेकॉहि तुअ पदबन्ध करिअ देखि निजजने 'लोचन' लाऊ ॥[119]

118. RT p. 41-42.
119. RT p. 99-100.

6. *Govindadāsa*[120]

We may now pass on to the consideration of Govindadāsa, perhaps the greatest successor of Vidyāpati. He is one of the several Maithila poets whom Bengal has claimed and glorified as her own. We are grateful to Babu Nagendranatha Gupta for first pointing it out to the Bengalis that Govindadāsa was a Maithila and not a Bengali. Cetanātha Jhā and Candā Jhā confirmed this fact while Mathurā Prasad Dikshit published an edition of the poems of Govindadāsa. Dr. Amaranatha Jha has finally brought out an authentic Maithila edition of Govindadāsa's poems based on the collections of Candā Jhā.

As to the life and times of Govindadāsa we have enough information. Ramadāsa's *Ānandavijaya Nāṭikā* contains a vivid account of the qualities of head and heart of his elder brother and teacher, Govindadāsa. He was a contemporary of Mahārāja Sundara Thākura (1643/4—1670/1) and belonged to the mother's family of the late Mahārāja Rāmeshwara Singha Bahadur (1898-1929). The Pañjī gives the following family tree of Govindadāsa[121] :—

120. Bibliography in Dr. Sukumar Sen's *History of Brajabuli*; *Journal of Dept. of Letters*, Calcutta University, 1927, 1935, and 1939; *Bangiya Sāhitya Parishad Patrikā* Vol. XXXVI p. 72 ff., 80, Bengali Year 1336, 2, pp. 69-124; D.C. Sen, *Vaishnava Literature*; *Govinda Gītāvalī* Ed. by Mathuraprasad Dikshita, published from Pustakabhandara, Laheraiserai; *Sarasvatī* 1935, and *Modern Review* 1930, 35, articles by Nagendranatha Gupta; *Śṛṅgāra-Bhajanāvalī* (pts. I and II) edited by Prof. Amaranatha Jha and published in *Sahitya Patra*, Darbhanga. It is strange that so far not a single old manuscript found in Mithila gives a poem from these padāvalīs. References to Harinārāyaṇa, Naranārāyaṇa and Raya Campati (Dr. Jha's ed. pt. I. pp. 15, 31, 5, and pt. II p. 15) are not explained from contemporary Maithila figures, but see Dr. Sen's *History of Brajabuli* p. 106ff.

121. R. Jha's introduction to *Śṛṅgāra Bhajanāvalī*. He has also discussed the probable native village of the poet on the basis of Pañjī in a recent article.

Kátyáyana Gotra—Kujaulibára (*Śrotriya*)

Mm. Śucikara Jha
|
Śivadāsa Jha
|
Kṛṣṇadāsa Jha
|
Gaṅgādāsa — Govinda-dāsa — Haridāsa — Ramadāsa — Daughter married to Mahārāja PURSOTTAMA THAKURA

Daughter married to Dāmodara Thakur's (Maheśa Thakur's elder brother) grand-son Murāri Thakura

All his brothers seem to have been poets. We know Gaṅgādāsa to be the author of two Sanskrit works of poetry—*Gangábhakti* and *Gangávilása*. Haridāsa, we have already seen above as a Maithilī poet. Ramadāsa will be discussed as a dramatist in the next part of the present work.

Traditionally Govindadāsa is said to have written a work called *Krsna-Lílá*.[122] Perhaps it was the name given to the series of Rādha-Kṛṣṇa Padas which are known after him today. For, his poems have a unity of description and treatment in the delineation of Kṛṣṇa's sports and the Viraha of the Gopīs.

The poetry of Govindadāsa has very marked differences from that of Vidyāpati. While Vidyāpati is sophisticated, piles metaphor upon metaphor, creates courtly atmosphere of joys and sorrows of human life and in general succeeds in entering the sentiments of men and women at large in simple and directly sensual language, Govindadāsa is straight-forward, loves

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122. *Ibid*; Cetanatha Jha and later on Caṇḍā Jha in appendix to his *Mithilābhāṣā Rāmāyaṇa*.

to play upon the sound and meaning of letters and words, is erotically devotional, writes not for any courtly audience but for the satifaction of a devout heart, and has sometimes expressed in obscurest but most sensuous language the emotions of a poetic artist.

Dr. Sukumar Sen has thus summed up the leading qualities of his poetry:

> "He drew largely upon classical lyric poetry for treatment in vernacular. All the simple and complex figures of speech and other devices known in Sanskrit Rhetorics were utilised by our poet. But the greatest achievement..............is metrical perfection added to musical assonance and rhythmic movement For this the poet had to take the course to *Anuprâsa*[123] which never marred the beauty of his poems as it would have surely done in case of poems by an inferior poet. This love for alliteration and assonance is not infrequently responsible for the absence of thought. Though only the external polish is apparent in his poems, it cannot be denied that the poet's power of describing the amorous sentiment and his colourful imagination were of a very high order.........
> The music of his verses and rythmic diction of his language, full of *Tatsama* and semi *Tatsama* words and forms, compensates for everything.

> "The poet modelled his songs after those of Vidyâpati (whom he calls his master in one of his poems)[124]................. He has written on the

123. He uses Anuprâsa or alliteration in many ways. Often he would use in a Pada words which begin with the same letter *e.g.* see in the I part of *Sṛṅgâra Bhajanâvalî* (Sahitya Patra ed.) Padas 139 (ga), 141 (na), 142 (ra), 143 (ta), 144 (da), 145 (ja), 146 (tha), 148 (cha), 149 (ba), 151 (bha), 152 (ha), and 159 (dha). The beauty of some of these poems has, contrary to what Dr. S. Sen says, been marred by the excessive use of alliteration and assonance. Those poems which do not have this kind of alliteration are often definitely superior to these.

124. कविपति विद्यापति मतिमाने ।
जाक गीत जगचित चोराओल ।
[गोविन्द गौरि सरस रस गाने । etc.

psychological aspect and on all different topics of the love story of Radha and Kṛṣṇa.[125] ....

" Musical word paining was his *forte*.[126] Nevertheless in the depiction of the passion and the disappointment of love and its intensity, he has really very few equals.........He has (not) dealt with the filial and friendly sentiment *Vâtsyalya* and *Sakhya Bhâva*...... ...When they are sung in the right *Kirttana* style, the songs of Govindadâsa become extremely enjoyable............ . .. रसना-रोचन श्रवणविलास । रचइ रुचिर-पद गोविन्द दास ॥" [127]

(" Sweet to the tongue and a treat to the ears, Govindadâsa composes his radiant songs").[128]

The defects of his poetry are a natural corollary to his qualities. There is more artistry, more sweetness and more smoothness in the movement of the lines, than depth of feeling, largeness of vision and intensity of imagination. It is no exaggeration to say that meaning is sacrified to formal beauty in his poems.

—Nagendranatha Gupta Vasumati edition of *Vidyâpati Padâvalî* p. 1.

125. Mana (Estrangement and annoyance), Nayika, 'Bahuvallabha'-Nayaka, Viraha when Kṛṣṇa goes to Gokula, (including Barahamâsas), Rasalila. Akṣa-Krida, Holi-Vasantalila, Kṛṣṇavarṇana, Radhavarṇana, Abhisara, Union—all these are dealt with in his poems. Voluptuous songs are, however, rarer in him than in Vidyapati.

126. शब्दक एहन विन्यासी कवि मिथिला भाषा मे दोसर नहि मेल तथा पद कें ललित श्रुतिमधुर अर्थानुग्रही एवं समता संयुक्त बनएबा मे बदि शब्द क तो इहुपडलेन्हि, ओकरस्वरूप विकृतो करए पडलेन्हि, अर्थं दूरिओ भए गेलन्हि तथा अपन हृदयक भाव झांपलो भए गेलन्हि तथापि गोविन्ददास अर्थक प्रसादक हेतु शब्दक विन्यास नहि दूरि कएलैन्हि ।

—शृंगार-भजनावली (Intro. p. 5).

127. *Śrngâra Bhajana-Gîtâvalî*, edited by Dr. A. Jha, pt II. p. 69, except that 'रचइ' is 'रचि' in the text.

128. Dr. Sukumar Sen *Hist. of Brajabulî Lit.* pp. 109, 134.

The following poems are chosen as the best specimens of his poetry :

(i) Radha practiceses Abhisara :

कंटक गाड़ि कुसुम सम पदतल मंजिर चीरहि झाँपि ।
गागरि बारि बारि करि पिच्छल चल तहँ अंगुलि चाँपि ॥
माधव तुअ अभिसारक लागि ।
दुरतर पन्थगमन धनिसाधय मन्दिर यामिनि जागि ॥
करयुग नयन मूँदि चलु भामिनि तिमिर पयानक आशे ।
कर कङ्कण पन कणि मुखबन्धन शिखय भुजगगुरु पाशे ॥
गुरुजन बचन बधिर सम मानय आन सुनय कह आन ।
परिजन बचन मुगुधि सम हासय गोविन्ददास परमान ॥[129]

(ii) Radha shows her intensity of desire in Viraha thus:

जँह पहु अरुण चरण चल जात । तँह तँह धरणि होअओ मोर गात ॥
जे दरपण पहु निज मुख चाह । मोर अंग जोति होअओ तसुमाँह ॥
जे सरोवर पिय नितनित नाह । मोर अंग सलिल होअओ तसुमाँह ।
जे बीजन पहु बिजइत गात । मोर अंगताहि होअओ मृदु बात ॥
जँह पहु भरमय जलधर श्याम । मोर अंग गगन होअओ तसु ठाम ॥
गोविन्ददास कह काञ्चन गौरि । से मरकत तनु तोहि कि छोड़ि ॥[130]

(iii) Krsna's description :

सुरपति धनु कि शिखल चूडे । मालति माल्य बलाकिनि ऊडे ॥
भाल कि झापल बिधु अधखंड । करिवर कर किय ओ भुजदंड ॥
ओ कि श्याम नटराज । जलद कपलनबर मणिसमाज ॥ ध्रु ॥
कर किसलय किय अरुण विकास । मुरलि खुरलि किय चातक भाष ॥
हास कि करय अमिय मकरन्द । हार कि तारक ज्योतिक छन्द ॥
पदतल थल कि कमल घनराग । तह कलहंस कि नूपुर जाग ॥
गोविन्ददास कहय मतिमन्त । भूलल जहाँ द्विजराज बसन्त ॥[131]

(iv) Radha's description :

धनि धनि राधा आवय रे धनि ब्रजरंगिणिगण मुकुटमणी ।
अधरसुरंगिनि रसिकतरंगिनि रमणि मुकुटमणि वरतरणी ॥

129. *Srngara-Bhajana-Gitavali*, pt. II pada 114,
130. Ibid, part I pada 110.
131, Ibid, part II pada 21,

कुच-मनु-बारिधि किन-कुच-भारिधि,कॉंचलि पर निकमाधिहारिवी ।
कनक-सुदीपमणि बरब बिजुरि जनि रसना किंकिणि मणि मधुरधुनी ॥
अतिशय मॉंझ छिनि गुरु नितम्बिनि विलुलित करवेणी छवि लावनी।
मरालगमनि धनि वृषभानु-नृपतनी गोविन्ददास पहुमनमोहनी ॥[132]

(v) Mādhava as Śiva :

आकुल चिकुर चूड शिखि चनुक भालहि सिन्दुर दहना ।
चन्दन-चन्द मॅंह लांगल मृगमद ताहि बेकत तिनि नयना ॥
माधव अब तोँह शंकर देवा ।
बावत पुन फल प्रापक मेटल दूरहि दूर रहु सेवा ॥ ध्रुव ॥
चन्दन रेख धूसर मेल सब तनु सेह भसम सम मेल ।
तोहर दरशनै मोर मन मनमथ मनोरथ सौं जरि गेल ॥
अबहुँ बसन पर कहाँ दिगम्बर शंकर नियम उपेखि ।
गोविन्ददास कह इह पर अम्बर गयाबित लखनहि देखि ॥[133]

(vi) Rādhā lamenting her Viraha :

आँचर मुखशशि गोय । बेर बेर लोचन रोय ।
कारण बिनु त्वगहास । उतपत दीह निशास ॥
सुनु सुनु सुन्दर श्याम । प्रेमक इह परिनाम ॥
तातल तनु नहि छोट । सतत महीतल लोट ॥
ककरहु किछु नहि कहय । के अस वेदन सहय ॥
जगभरि कुलवति वाद । के दय करब संवाद ॥
गोविन्ददास आशो भास । जीवय तुअ अभिलास ॥[134]

Several minor poets whom it has not been possible to indentify at all may be now grouped together.

1. *Bhavesadurati*[135]

2. *Bhavánináthá*[136]—In a poem he speaks of his patron as Nṛpadeva. He may be identified with Ayācī Dube.

132. Ibid, pada 49.
133. Ibid, part I pada 44.
134. Ibid, part II pada 79.
135. KNP No. 127.
136. RT p. 95.

3. *Caturánana Kavi*[137]—(Is he the same of Catura Caturana?).

4. *Dharanidhara*[138]—We know of two Dharanıdharas ; one Dharanidera is father of Gangā-Viṣṇu[139] and the other the copyist of Ramāpati Upādhyāy's *Vrtta-sára*[140] (in Śake 1602=1680 A.D.).

5. *Jayakrsna*[141]—may be identified as the compiler of *Bhaktiratnávali* by Viṣṇupuri [141A].

6. *Jayaráma*[142]—Is he the same as Jayarāma the commentator of *Kávyapra-káśa*?[143] or as Jyarāmadatta the dramatist[143A] (=pt III ch. II

7. *Kumudí.*[144]

8. *Rájá Lakhanacanda.*[145]

9. *Nrpa Prítinátha.*[146]

10. *Prthivícanda*[147] refers to his patron one Mallika Dulāra.

11. *Kavirája Puranamalla*[148] may be identified with one Prāṇa Malla of Giddhaura who built a temple of Vaidyanātha and was

137. RT p. 61 62.

138. RT p 98.

139. Nepal Cat. p. 154.

140. MMC II p. 25.

141. RT p. 88 Jayakrṣṇa is the exact name in the text.

141A. MMC II-iii p. 99.

142. Several poems in N. G. and Venipuri's ed. e.g. p. 258.

143. MMC II ii p. 27.

144. RT p. 68.

145. RT p. 110.

146. RT p. 80

147. N No. 208 पृथिविचन्दभने मेदिनि बार ॥ इ रस पुरुष मंलिक दुलार ।

148. RT p. 51-52.

a poet and a patron of poets [*Dist. Gaz.*, (*Mon-ghyr*), Gazeteer under 'Giddhaura'].

12. *Ratnâi Kavi*[149]—may be identified with Kavi Ratna[150] who flourished at the court of a Raja Lakhanacanda (? same as No. 8 above) husband of Devaladevi, or as Kavi Ratna the author of *Sarojakalikâ* (before 1610)[151]

13. *Sadânanda*[152] we know one Maithilâ Sadananda the author of a Smṛti work in Bundelakhanda,[153] but he may not have anything to do with this Sadānanda.

14. *Sangâma Kavi.*[154]

Besides these, numerous annonymous poems are quoted in the Anthologies and many poems have lost their Bhanitās for some reason or the other.

In Nepal.

1. *Siddhi Narasingha*[155] (? Simha Bhupati)[156]

Babu Nagendranatha Gupta wrongly regarded 'Bhupati' or 'Simha Bhupati' to be

149. RT p. 77 and p. 105.
150. RT p. 105.
151. *Nepal Cat.* p. 33.
152. RT p. 112 and KNP No. 102.
153. *Madhukara* IV, Nos. 21-22 ; C. 1605-27.
154. KNP No. 47.
155. (१) KNP Nos. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 सिंघनरसिंहभन
(२) KNP No. 50 नृपसिंघ
(३) KNP Nos 118, 119, 120, 121 सिंघ नृपती
(४) BHÂSÂ MS (B) No. 132 (१) सुनह मिनति नरसिंह
(It may refer to God नरसिंह ?)
(५) RT p. 74 जेहनिरमलि नृपसिंह कह etc.
156. RT. p. 75 कहहि कौं वह होए पेरंजसिंह भूपति भान ||

another name for Śivasimha or Vidyapati.[157] There is every reason to believe that this was the name of some other poet. 'Bhupati' may be the Nepalese royal poet 'Bhupatindra'. Or, we know of one Simha—Bhupala who wrote a commentary on Śṛngaradeva's *Sangita-ratnākara* and the *Rasārnava-sudhākara*.[158] This Simha Bhūpala may be identified with Bhupāla-Simha a Maithila king of Karṇāṭa Dynasty.[159]

He might still, however, be identified with "Simha-Nṛpati"[160] who is clearly the famous Nepalese king Siddhi-Narasimha of Pāṭan who ruled from (about 1620-1657[161]). He seems to have been a prolific poet and a whole Padāvalı is known after him. His poems also bear the Bhanitās of "Nṛpasimha," "Narasimha" and "Siddhi Narasimha" He is known to have been the author of a drama too.[162]

'Siddhi' Narasimha was a 'saint' (a jivan-mukta) and ruled for about forty years. He enlarged the durbar of Lalitpur. He made one Viśvanātha Upādhyāya (a Maithila ?) his guru. He loved Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā. He relinquished worldly affairs on the 12th of Māgha-Kṛṣṇa Nepālı Sam. 772 (= 1652 A.D.) and went on a pilgrimage. The attributes of this poet-

157. He appears to have interpreted Bhūpatisingha as Śivasimha, and added Vidyāpati's name in the Bhanitās.

158. Krishnamachari, *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, p. 853, but see SINGH p. 167.

159. See IA IX p. 188. Lalitapur Inscription of Siddhi Narasingha (dated 23rd Feb. 1637) where it is mentioned that Nānyadeva 7 Gangadeva 7 Nṛsimha 7 Ramasimha 7 Śaktisimha 7 Bhupalasimha 7 Harisimhadeva. K. P. Jayaswal thought him to be referred to by Canda Jha too, p. 24 (introduction to *Rājanīti Ratnākara*).

160. RT p. 74 and KNP Nos. 118, 119, 120, 121.

161. Wright, *History of Nepal*, p. 243.

162 See below part III.

king's personality are summed up thus by the traditional Brahmaṇas:[163]

> "Siddhi Narasimha, the Omniscient, the jivanmukta, the chaste, the favourite of Krishna, the master of yogi, the chief of poets, the relinquisher of the world, the son (=descendant of the family of) Harisimha. He who repeats this Śloka will be absolved from sin."

The extant poems of Narasimha are enough to show the great popularity he enjoyed as a poet.

2. *Raja Śrinivása Malla*[164]

Śrinivāsa was the successor of Sidddhi Narasimha and is said to have reigned from about 1657 to 1701.[165] He extended the period of dancing in the month of Kārttika, inaugurated by his father, from fifteen to twenty-five days. He seems to have been a great patron of music and dancing.

3 *Nrpa Malla Deva*[166]

It is difficult to identify this poet with any known figure. Obviously, he may be either of the above two poets or any other Malla Rājā. Possibly he is not Siddhi Narasimha, because he is not known to have called himself as a Malla in any of his poems. He might be identified with Bhupatindra because it is he alone among the poet Malla Rājās who calls himself 'Malla-nṛpa[167] but it is better if we do not make anything definite so long as some fresh facts are discovered.

163 Wright, *History of Nepal*, p. 242.

164. One poem in RT p. 48.

165. Wright, *op. cit*, p. 243, ff.

166. One poem in N No. 170 [illegible] and one poem in KNP No. 114 [illegible]

167. BHĀṢĀ GITA MS (B) Nos. 4, 62, 92, etc.

4. *Bhupatindra*[168]

He reigned from 1695 to 1722 over Nepal. He was one of the most important writers of Maithilī lyrics in Nepal. His songs are collected in a Padāvalī. Dr. Bagchi first discovered it; now I have also examined it. It contains about 100 poems. They are on a variety of topics. There are devotional songs on Śiva, Gaurī, Hari and Śakti. Śiva is called the Lord of Music (cf. नृत्यनाथाय नमः) and a Nandī sort of verse in His praise[169] begins this collection :

वएथ (जयतु ?) अरंरूप यव (जय ?) ।
हर गिरजापति कन्दय (?) ॥
लसित (लसित ?) शिर वह निज मन गङ्गा ।
रजनि रमन वर मौलि विरूपित दवि कलितत (?) अभरङ्गा ॥
विधिकमलाय···दवदीन यतिक जय पद यम सेवा ।
हक (?) कलय तरु दवनि रजनि ओ असहश नहि देवा ॥
जय कर (?) भय विश्वलोक गीतमूर्ति जिनकर गुणगान ।
जन गाव वह वन वाजि यतिवन पूज सबु कत...र जान ॥···
भुव नृप हास न ह अ व व (?) भूभुज 'भूपतीन्द्र' शिवगुणभान ।
प्रबल धरिक्षितिपति रुद्र (हुन) क गति ईश करह अवधान ॥

or the second song which ends :[170]

विधि निहर हर हर सिद्धि दयिय शिव ।
एहन श्रीभूपतीन्द्र गाव ॥

168. (१) Ibid, e.g., Nos. 1 and 2, 7, 93 etc. Bhanita : भूपतीन्द्र or—श्रीभूपतीन्द्र

(२) Ibid, e.g., Nos. 3, 17, 40, 55, 57, 66, Bhanita : नरपति भूपतीन्द्र or नृपवर भूपतीन्द्र or भूपतीन्द्र नृप

(३) Ibid, e.g., Nos. 4, 62, 92, Bhanita : भूपतीन्द्र मल्लनृप or भूपतीन्द्रमल्ल

(४) Ibid, e.g., No : 44 Bhanita : नेपालनृपतिक भूपतीन्द्र

(५) Ibid, e.g., No : 54 Bhanita : रविकुल भूषण भूपतीन्द्र

169. BHĀṢĀGITA MS (B)

170. Ibid.

To Hari he prays :[171]

पीत वसन कुसित (?) विराज ।
खगपति आसन विराज ।
शंक चक्र गता पद्म बाहु सहाव ।,..
'भूपतीन्द्र' हरि गुण गाव ।
पद युग सुन्दर हृदय विहाव ।

The largest number (more than half) of the lot are devotional songs on Sakti. He sings to Gaurī :[172]

जय हिमालय नन्दिनी ।
हरक घरिणि तोह देवि गोसाउनि ।
चौदह भुवनक ई रानि ।

or to Durgā he says specifically :[173]

जय नगनन्दिनि, वाहनि मृगराज ।
अनुखन सबय् विधि सुरराज ।

or to the Mother of the World :[174]

भैरव जय जय ईश्वरी महेश्वरि नाटेश्वरि जगजननी
चउदह भुवन नृत्य मसय नु अंग दीपिवाद ।।

or generally to Devis :[175]

हे देवि शरण राख भवानि ।
मन वच करम करओ मान किछू ॥
से सबे तू आपद् आनि ।
हमे अति दिनहीन तुअ सेवा ॥
राख हरि वचन ठानि ।
अभि(वि)नय मोर अपराध सम्भव ॥
मन जनु राखह आनि ।
अओर इतर जन जग जत से सबे ॥

171. Ibid.

172. And several others Ibid Nos. e.g., 20, 39, 49, 58, 67 etc.

173. BHĀṢĀ GITA MS (B).

174. Ibid.

175. *Sāhitya Pariṣad Patrikā*, Calcutta, Baṅgābda, 1336 p. 177.

गुन रसमक से बाखि।
तुअ पदकमल भमोर मोर मानस ॥
जनमे जनमे एहो भानि।
भूपतीन्द्र नृप एहो रस गावे ॥
जय श्रीरिजापति बानि ॥

There are love songs also—of no mean order:[176]

कि माधव न सेवह अबलाशु पानि ॥ ध्रु०
सर(द) कामिनि हमे हरिलोह हे चउदिसे, देखि शशि दाह परान ॥
नाह अपनहि कह मने भावि, मलयपवन हन चान ॥
मधुकर भमि विपिन कुसुमरमि, धूलि पिअय कर राव (लाव)।
युवति हृदय दल परम कथित मन, थाह न तह अति भाव ॥
सरसिज सरोवरे द्रुममय पिक धूनि, सुनि जीव काँपय मोर।
भवन आसन चन भल न नआपय, खने खने चिति खिति मोर ॥
कवन गुणे पलत रयनि गमाओल आतू रे आरत गेयान।
भूपतीन्द्र नरपति भन सून मानिनि रतिरस होएत निधान ॥

5. *Jagajjyotirmalla*[177]

He ruled over Nepal from about 1613 to 1633. One of the greatest patrons of music, he was himself a good poet. He employed many Maithils at his court.[178]

6. *Jagatprakáśamalla*[179] and or

176. Ibid; BHÂṢÂ GIṬA MS (B) No. 37.
177. Poems in Bhāṣa Ms (B) have Bhanitas:
    (१) No. 99 नृप जगजोति
    (२) No. 115 नृप जगजोतिर्मल्ल
    (३) No. 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175.

See more about him in Pt. III of this work.

178. Wright *op. cit.*
179. Songs in BHÂṢÂ GITA MS (B) are many:
    (१) Bhanitâ in Nos. 112, 120, 121, 125, 126, 127? etc. जगतप्रकाश,
    (२) Bhanitâ No. 113, जगतप्रकाशनृप

Candraśekharasiṁha[180]

Jagatprakāśamalla of Nepal ruled from about 1655 to 1676. He has left us a number of songs. They are grouped under three headings: (*a*) Songs on the ten Avatāras of God.[181] (*b*) Songs on Viṣṇu.[182] (*c*) Songs on Sadāśiva.[183]

There is a great confusion in some of the Bhanitās of these songs. "नृप चन्द्रप्रकाश" is given three or four times as possible pen-names of Jagatprakāśamalla, Jagatacaṇḍa, Caṇḍaprakāśa, and Candraśekhara. There is, however, one Bhanitā [Song no. 160 in BHĀṢĀ GITA—Ms (B)] which has:

जगतप्रकाश कि आभन आ आ चन्द्रशेषरसिंहं मन कि हारा।

and one other (Songs Ibid Nos. 162 and 164) which have:

जगतप्रकाश दरसन ...रि माथि चन्द्रशेषरसिंह।

Possibly Candraśekhara was a court-poet of Jagatprakāśa and wrote poems in the latter's name. At any rate, it is not very clear as to why Jagatprakāśa's poems should have in

(३) Bhanita No 114, जगतप्रकाशमहीपति,

(४) Bhanita No 119, जगतप्रकाश भन नाटक नाथ, जगतप्रकाशमल भूपति

(५) Bhanita Nos. 117?, 122?, 127?, 129, 130, 131, 133, 134, 138, 139 : जगतचन्द्र or जगतचन्द्न

(६) Bhanita No, 123 : जगत्चन्द्र with चिंतामिन उपमल्ल

(७) Bhanita No. 124 : चन्द्रशेखर

180. Ibid.

181. BHĀSĀ GITA MS (B). After No. 153 इति श्री श्री(ता)ष्टाष्टक चन्द्रप्रकाश दशावताल कीर्त्तनभाव समाप्तः।

182. Ibid after No. 143 इति श्री श्री भाखुगे (गीतासु ?) नृपचन्द्र प्रकाशे विष्णु भाव समाप्तः।

183. Ibid after No. 145 इति श्रीगीतासुनृपचन्द्र प्रकाशकृते सदाशिव भाव समाप्तः।

Bhanita 'Candra,' 'Śekhara' 'Śekharasingha 'Candraśekhara'. Of course, all these may be some form of a synonym of his name. For, one 'Jagatcanda' mentions the name Jitamitramalla : Compare Bhanita of song No. 123 :

जगतचन्द कृतनित वरि सपने । हनरवधू देखिलो गे ।
जितमित्र जगमल चिरंजिव हो जय सहस कनिस नाव ॥

The songs of Jagatprakaśamalla are not very poetic. They are mostly words put together just to provide some devotional ideas for the use of the musicians. They are, however, sincere and devotional.

There is a song on Ganeśa which begins his Padas thus :

प्रथमहिं सुमरु हों गुरु गणेश जस गाव । ··· ··
ताहरि सोहावन मोरमन भाव जगत प्रकाश भूप कानु के गाव ॥

There are usual prayers to Gauri and various forms of Śakti. The following is quoted as an instance :

नहि आन गति हमरा माता ॥ध्रु०॥
मानु मद वचन कयल तुअ सेवा ।
कर ताकर कुल देवा ।
मोर अपराध दुसह मोह माना मोर
पुका काक (?) थान। एह संसार साहसेवि शिरिजस तोहरिह
दह अभदा कर जोरिविनति करबकाया
पुरमवि मोर आस ॥ [184]

The songs on Śiva are equally moving :

मोह ईसर कयल पितृ बनवास ।
तुअ पद पंकज मोरा आस ॥
सिलक दाव रताह ? तालक वति ।
वाम दिस नसब चर मधूर बनि ॥
कानं कुण्डल अहि-हाल मुण्डमाल ।[185] etc..

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184. BHAṢĀ GITA MS (B) No. 128.
185. Ibid.

There are hardly any love songs or Radhā-Kṛṣṇa songs. This is a marked feature of Jagatprakāśamalla's work.

7. *Jitāmitra*[186]

He reigned from about 1680 to 1690. Only one of his stray lyrics is known to exist and it is devotional.

8. *Ranajitamalla*[187]

He reigned from 1721 to about 1772. Most of the songs from his pen are hymns to Sakti, and some of them are wholly in Sanskrit.

IV

CONCLUSION

We have traced the development of Maithili lyric far beyond the limits of the Early Maithili Literature. The tradition of Vidyāpati's lyrics did not end with Govindadāsa or Jitāmitra. It also found expression in the dramas that were written in Mithila or Nepal. Poet after poet introduced lyrics in Sanskrit dramas and ultimately the poetic drama of the Kirtaniyās came to be composed of songs alone. Independently of drama also

186. Two poems in BHÂṢÂ GITA MS (B) No. 111 and 165. Bhanita in both : सहज सनहि हित नृपति जितामित्र हर पद भनति भाव

187. Many poems are extent in BHÂṢÂ GITA MS (B)
(१) Bhanita Nos. 102, 103, 106 : जयरथ जितामित्र
(२) Bhanita Nos. 107, 108 : रणजितमल्लो
(३) Bhanita Nos. 109, 110 : विश्व...रणजित or विश्व-लक्ष्मीपुत्ररणजित

the tradition was carried on till quite recently. Grierson collected some of these, and gave their account in 'Twenty-one Vaishnava Hymns.'[188] We shall not be wrong to conclude, therefore, that the type of lyrical writing set up by Vidyapati and his contemporaries inspired the writers of all succeeding generations in Mithila.

188. JRASB Sp. No. 1884, Vol. LXII Part 1.

PART III

Middle Maithili Literature

CHAPTER VII

MAITHILI DRAMAS IN NEPAL

I

INTRODUCTORY

लीलेयं वनिता धृतिस्तु सुखिना शिक्षा प्रमत्तात्मनाम् ।
संसारस्थितिरीदृशीति विरतिर्ज्ञानाधिया योगिनाम् ॥
प्रीतिः काव्यरसाशिनां नयनवाकीर्तिः कवीनामियम् ।
विद्या नाटकसंज्ञिका भगवती विश्वोपकारक्षमा ॥[1]

Origin of Vernacular Drama

Tho edifice of Vernacular drama was built on the ashes of Sanskrit drama. At the time when the Vernaculars were gaining ascendancy, Sanskrit drama had almost declined. "The invasion of the Musalmans, who were in no way friendly to the growth of dramatic art[2], gradually brought about its death. The drama took refuge in those parts of India where Muslim power was slowest to extend.........."[3]

So powerful was the influence of Sanskrit drama, however, that in those parts too the first attempt to evolve a more easily intelligible kind of drama—Sanskrit and Prākṛta were becoming unintelligible to the masses—

1. Vidyāpati, *Puruṣaparīkṣā*, "Nṛtyavidyakathā".

2. See *e g*. Shipley, *Introduction to Literature* on Persian Literature.

3. Kieth, *Sanskrit Drama*, p. 242-243.

took such a form as continued to give Sanskrit and Prākṛta as prominent a place as before; only vernacular also came to be gradually introduced in profusion.

Throughout the North-Eastern India, away from the depradations of the Muslim conquerors, there grew up in course of time fresh types of drama which were represented by the "yātrās" of Bengal, the "Ankia-Nāṭs" of Assam and the "Kirtaniyas" of Mithila. They all originated in some form of devotion to Kṛṣṇa, but gradually, they all went beyond religious bounds. Of course, even when they were secularised, the predominance was given to Pauraṇic stories and legends.

The uniqueness of Medieval Maithili drama lies in the simplification and rejuvination of the stage. Music and dancing formed its nucleus. The insistence was upon popular appeal. The poetic beauty, the complexity of action and the psychological development of character became less important than musical entertainment provided by the play. There was no effort to concentrate on the newness of the theme and on the charm of the story as story. This is why we have a large number of dramas repeatedly put on the stage with minor changes by different authors.

Like the Sanskrit drama, the audience which witnessed the performances of Maithili drama was made up of men and women of the court. Of course, at a later stage, an independant line of popular drama—the Kirtaniyā drama—was founded which was staged before an audience, composed of all sorts of persons, the learned, the semi-literate, the illiterate, the ladies, the children and the common folk of the locality. Naturally, in this second kind of drama, whatever influence of Sanskrit and Prākṛta had remained, disappeared.

Thus, Mithila was able to continue Indian dramatic activity in a fresh and invigorating form albeit in the vernacular. It is a matter of great importance that Maithili has a large number of dramas at such an early period.

Beginnings of Vernacular Drama in Mithila and the Circumstances Leading to its Growth in Nepal

Maithila scholars are known to have cultivated the drama even before the birth of the vernacular drama. Pakṣadhara Miśra says in his famous Sanskrit drama *Prasanna-Rāghava* when the Sutradhāra answers the question as to how could there be a union of the poet and the scholar:

सूत्रधारः—क इह विस्मयः

येषां कोमलकाव्यकौशलकलालीलावतीभारती

तेषां कर्कशतर्कवक्रवचनोद्गारेऽपि किं हीयते ।

The first known writer who introduced vernacular in Sanskrit drama was Vidyapati Thakura (c. 1360-c. 1448). Unfortunately we have no trace of his practice having been continued immediately after him in Mithila proper. The clue, however, was taken up by scholars who went and received patronage in Nepal Hence we have a consistent account of the growing use of Mithila's vernacular in the dramas in Nepal. By 1600, wholly vernacular plays came to be written.

The relations of Nepal and Mithila have been very intimate from remote times. In Ancient times a part of Mithila lay within the present boundaries of Nepal. Even today some of the Maithili speaking districts[4] lie in Nepal. Janakapur, her Ancient capital, and Simrson, the capital of Mahārāja Nānyadeva (c.1097), the

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4. Such as districts of Mohatari, Saptari, Moranga.

founder of the first historical dynasty of Mithila, lay within her territory.

It is said that for a number of years the direct route to plains from Nepal was through Mithila alone. That is why under the stress of Musalman invaders, Maithila rulers could seek refuge in Nepal so easily. Mahāraja Harisiṁhadeva (c. 1296-1323/4 A. D.) is said to have gone there when he was overthrown by the Musalmāns in 1323 and established himself at or near Bhātgaon[5]. His arrival produced a tremendous change in the history of Nepal and in her relations with the people of Mithila. Some scholars are of opinion that this great historical event did not occur at all[6]—but the Maithila Pañjī and Nepalese Vaṁśāvalīs agree in supporting this account.

After the death of Harisiṁhadeva, his sons Mānasiṁhadeva and Śyāmasiṁhadeva ruled over Nepal for about twenty-seven years[7]. The daughter of Śyāmasiṁhadeva was married to a scion of an ex-ruling family of Nepal now residing in Mithila. Henceforth, Maithilas gained decided ascendancy in the Nepalese court and their mother-tongue was loved and respected in all distinguished quarters[8]. We

5. Cf. बाणाब्धि (or बाणाब्धि) बाहु शशि सम्मित शाकवर्षे
पौषस्य शुक्लदशमी क्षिति सुनुवारे ।
त्यक्त्वा सुपट्टन पुरीं हरिसिंहदेवो
दुर्दैव देशित पथो गिरि माविवेश ॥
—MODA No. 2 p. 23.

6. Such as Bendall in "Nepal and Its Surrounding Countries" Introduction to *Nepal Cal.* p. 14.

7. Political and historical information in these chapters is based on Bendall Ibid. and Wright, *History of Nepal.*

8. In course of time various other matrimonial alliances were conducted between the people of Mithila and the kings of Nepal *e.g.* Pratāpamalla married there in 1639 and Raṇabahādura Śāha (1777-1805) and Gīrvāṇayuddhavikrama Śāha in later times.

know of several eminent pandits from Mithila who were invited to Nepalese courts. For example, Jayasthitimalla (1380-1394) called Kirttinātha Upādhyāya, Raghunātha Jhā, Srinātha Bhaṭṭa, Mahinātha Bhaṭṭa and Ramānātha Jhā, to make laws about houses, lands, castes and dead bodies", Jaggajjyotirmalla (1618-1633) invited Vaṁśamaṇi Jha; King Rāmasiṁhadeva son of Narasiṁhadeva patronised Ghatrakara Sukla[9] (1485); even in later times, Kṛṣṇa Datta Jhā[10] and Sakti Vallabha[11] (1777?-1805?), Bhānā Jha's[12] father, etc. were patronised in Nepalese courts. Indeed, the down-fall of the Oinivāra Dynasty and the occupation of Mithila by Musalman invaders induced a large number of Maithila scholars to seek shelter and patronage in Nepal for quite a long time.

The result of all this intercourse was that Maithili became the most dignified of all languages in Nepal. At Bhātgaon, Pāṭan or Kāthmāndu it established itself firmly. So says Dr. Bagchi:

"नेपालेर प्राचीन वंशेर ओ प्रभावसम्पन्न व्यक्तिदेर शिक्षार भाषा छिल मैथिलीकारण ताँदेर अनेके ई मिथिला थेके गिये छिलेन।"[13]

The success of the lyrics of Vidyāpati and his contemporaries and the glorious achievements of Maithila musicians of the day gave an added interest to Maithili in Nepal. Says Dr. Bagchi:

मिथिलार राजसभा तखन विद्यापतिर सङ्गीते मुखरित हच्छे। एइ सङ्गीतओ ये क्रमे नेपाले गिये पौँछिवे ताते आर आश्चर्य कि!"[14]

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9. MMC II p. 2.

10. Ibid, p. 47.

11. Ibid, p. 63 and others *e.g.* Ibid Intro, p. 1.

12. SINGH p. 127.

13. *Baṅgiya-Sāhitya Pariṣad Patrikā*, Baṅgālābda 1336, p. 172.

14. Ibid, p. 171.

Meanwhile, drama became very popular in Nepal. The spreading power of the Musalmāns in India had its influence in making it and other arts developing in the secluded courts of Nepal. The earliest Sanskrit drama in Nepal seems to have been written in the reign of Jayasthitimalla (1318-1394). He appears to have brought his love of dramatic literature from Mithila where he had :

> 'cultivated a fine literary taste for the display of which his new position as a king of Nepal afforded him ample opportunities. (He introduced the instrumental music of Dīpaka-Rāga at royal burials) The birth ceremony of his son Dharmamalla was celeberated by the performance of a four-Act (play named) *Rāmāyaṇa.* '[15]

This drama was originally composed in 1360 to please his father and then again at the request of one Yūthasiṁha, who was probably a contemporary Maithila Rājā and a relative of Jayasthiti. It was twice again performed,

> 'Once on the (above mentioned) birth ceremony and once more on the initiation ceremony of Dharmamalla".[16]

Another Sanskrit drama associated with Jayasthiti is *Bhairavānanda-Nāṭakam.* This was also probably written by a Maithila, one Maṇika,

> "the son of Rājā Vardhana who...was an expert in dramaturgy. This appears to be a secular drama, the hero being Bhairava and the heroine Madanāvatī, a celestial dancer cursed by a Riṣi to become a Mānuṣī. The drama was enacted on an appropriate occasion, namely, the marriage of Dharmamalla...the son of Jayasthitimalla...".[17]

The successors of Jayasthiti are not known to have patronised any literary or dramatic

15. MM. Haraprasad Sastri, Preface to *Nepal Cat,* p. XXXVII ff,

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

activity. This may be due to the chaotic condition of the sovereignty of Nepal. His greatest successor was Yakṣamalla who ruled for about forty-three years (up to c. 1474). He is said to have gone as far as Magadha conquering Mithila on his way and to have set in order all Nepal and to have subdued "the Rājās of all mountains". After his death, the kingdom was divided into three parts. His eldest son Raimalla founded the line of Bhātgāon (c. 1496), his second son Rāmamalla founded that of Banepā (Banikapura), and the youngest son Ratnamalla founded that of Kāthamāndu (Kāntipura and Lalitapāṭana). It is after this break-up of the kingdom that we begin to find records of great literary and cultural activity.

II

CHARACTERISTICS OF MAITHILI DRAMA IN NEPAL[1]

From the beginning of the Seventeenth Century to the second quarter of the Eighteyenth Century, Maithili drama flourished at its height in Nepal. It was able to discover a fresh technique for the Vernacular drama. and more or less replaced the Sanskrit dram The use of Sanskrit vanished in course of time, though the frame-work of the Sanskrit drama continued to be used for some time. In the new drama vernacular was ultimately given a predominant place.

1. Dr. P.C. Bagchi's article, "Nepale Bhāṣa Nāṭaka" in Bangiya Sahitya Parishad Patrika, Bangabda 1336; Nani Gopala's edition of *Nepale Bhâsâ Nâṭaka*; Kumara Ganganand Sinha JRAsB (New Series) XVIII, 1922, No. 4 p. 253 ff. and XX 1924 No. 1, p. 73. ff. and Dr. U. Mishra, *Hindustani*, 1935.

The usual structure of the "Irregular" Nepalese Maithili drama was as follows: After the Nandī (sometimes accompanied with Aṣṭamaṅgala and Puṣpāñjali), the Sūtradhāra and the Naṭī appeared on the stage, and introduced the subject-matter, the author, the patron and the occasion on which the play was composed. Then followed what was known as Rajavarṇana and Deśavarṇana (the description of the king and the country), and thereafter, the action proper commenced. The actors entered the stage and disclosed their identity through appropriate songs. The action progressed in songs and ended in songs. There are lacunas between the songs which might have been filled up by prose passages that were not put down in the play.[3] In some "Regular" dramas some small, simple and quiet sentences were embodied in the text.

There was little effort to bring in new or striking situations and characters. The main concern of the playwright was to present systematically a connected series songs which could be successfully sung on the stage; though they were accompanied by some gesticulation and action too. The plots were generally on some well-known subject. Indeed nobody could have understood or appreciated these dramas, if the stories were not known to him previously. The frequency with which the same stories of *Rámáyana*, *Mahábhárata*, *Harivamśa*, *Vidyávilápa*. *Mádhavánala* and various Purāṇas were chosen by the dramatists is also accounted for by this reason.

There seems to have been no vogue of painted scene on the stage. It was not thought probably necessary to attempt any realism on

2. Dr. Bagchi *op. cit.*, p. 173 ;

3. Ganganand Sinha, JRASB *op. cit.*

the stage. The context of the song and description contained in it was supposed to make it possible for the audience to locate a particular scene. The actors (we have no indication if there were actresses too) adequately dressed themselves. Their number was not limited to one as in the Ankianāt; indeed, there are occasions in these dramas where battles and merry-making in the gardens and ponds are supposed to be shown on the stage. There used to be a regular orchestra which accompanied the vocal music—indeed, it seems the main equipment of the actors was that they were expert musicians. There are at times stage directions for the orchestra when there was no vocal music.

The performances were held in the daylight and in the open. The division into Acts was generally based upon the amount of performance to be allotted to a single day. This is the reason why we find at the commencement of certain Acts: अथ such and such दिवसे and at their end, इति such and such अंकः.

Kumara Ganganand Sinha rightly says:—

> "On the whole, on reading these plays we get a very favourable impression of the court(s) of Nepal, with all its grandeur and ostentation, as a place for the encouragement of literature, music and art and resorted to by the people of the different parts of India, each giving its quota to the promotion and refinement of taste in the country. And above all, the language of these popular plays denotes the remarkable fact that Maithili had then become the literary language of Nepal."

III

THE DRAMATISTS

At Bhatgaon

On the three lines founded after the death of Yakṣamalla (c. 1474), the first at Bhatgāon

patronised the largest number of dramatists. We learn of the first Maithili drama during the reign of Viśvamalla (c. 1533), called *Vidyávilápa*. The Sutradhara says :

"श्रीमत् श्रीभक्तपत्तननगरी सकल गुणिजन शोभित, तारे महिमा शुन...
श्रीश्रीविश्वमल्ल नृपती...श्रीश्रीविश्वमल्लदेवस्य सभाके महिमा शुन...
अं भक्तपत्तननगरे विद्याविलाप नाटक प्रवर्त्त हैलो, ता देखि निमित्त आछे
आयो ।"[4]

The Ms. of this play is incomplete but it seems to be the earliest dramatic version of the story of Vidyavilapa.

In the reign of his successor Tribhuvanamalla *alias* Trailokyamalla (1572-1585/6) great literary activity is recorded. He is described thus :

तस्मात्त्रैलोक्यमल्लः समजनि रजनो जानि जेता वयोभिः ।
साहित्यन्यायशास्त्रागमवरकवितारत्न सञ्चार सिद्ध ।
दाता भोक्तावदाताश्रवगतिरनयश्चण्डिकापादसेवा ।
पद्मीभूताधिजातः शिवचरणसरोजन्मचिन्ताद्विरेफ ः ॥[5]

An incomplete Ms. of an annonymous Maithili drama on the life of Kṛṣṇa written under his patronage is extant. In the Bhaṇitā of its songs two poets are named—Ramacandra and Viranārāyaṇa. The play is inspired directly by Jayadeva and Vidyāpati. Dr. Bagchi quotes the following lines on Viraha as a specimen :

सघन बरिसए मेहा ।
सुमरि सुमन्दु महा ॥
जीव कट पर नींद न आवए ।
विरह दगध देहा ॥
मन पंछि हया जावो ।
जाहा पिया पाविवो ॥

4. Ibid, p. 172.
5. *Nepal Cat.*

हाते चरिया पाये पड़िया ॥
गला तुलिया लखियो ।
चन्दन चरि न भावे ॥
कुसुम सेज (न ?) सोहावे ।
अङ्ग मोरि मोरि आकुन थाकि
मन चौदिक भावे ॥[6]

Henceforth the dramatic activity in Nepal became very brisk and elaborate. Tribhuvanamalla's successor Jagajjyotirmalla (c. 1618-1633) was a great patron of learning and music. He got several important works written in his reign, such as, a commentary on Padmśri's *Nágarasarvasva*, *Slokasárasangraha*, *Sangítasárasangraha*, *Sangítabháskara*, *Sangítacandra* and Narapati's commentary on *Svarodayadípiká*.

Among his Maithili dramas, the earliest was *Muditakuvalayáśva*[7] (1628) which is frequently quoted by scholars because it contains valuable information regarding the Malla dynasty of Nepal Kings. The *Haragaurívivâha*[8] (1629) followed it. The third one, the *Kunjavihárínátaka*[9] is, a remarkably successful dramatisation of the story of Kṛṣṇa, Radhā and Gopis. It has been edited and published by Dr. P. C. Bagchi[10]. The Sutradhāra introduces the play thus :

कुञ्ज विहार हरि आज रे ।
गोपीं सबे हरसित आज रे ॥

6. Dr. Bagchi, *op. cit.* p. 173.

7. Ibid, p. 174

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Published in *Parícaya*, a leading Bengali monthly, Bengali year 1347 (c/o K. Bhaduri, 8b Dinbandhu Lane, Calcutta).

Radha and Krṣṇa are introduced on the stage with the following song :

जाहि बह जमुनातीर, शीतल सुरहि समीर ॥
नवदले तरुअरे सोह, मधुकर धनि सब मोह ॥
ताहि बिंदिरावन माँझ, हमर हृदय गुणेँ बाँझ ॥
ताहा गए करिए बिलास, बाभा पहुपुरीवए आस ॥
नृप जगज्जयोतिमल्लवाणी, मोर गति एके भवानी ॥

Then follows the description of the seasons and the conversation between Gopīs.

We know of no work during the reign of Jagajjyotirmalla's son and successor Narendramalla. But his grandson Jagatprakāśamalla (d. 1682) was one of the four great rulers of Bhatgāon who raised Maithili to its highest glory in Nepal. He was, however, a greater writer of independent devotional songs than of dramas.

The Nepal Durbar Library has six dramas attributed to him (a) *Uṣāharaṇa*[11] (b) *Naliyanāṭakam*[12] (1670) It is the longest of all and covers about 108 pages in Ms. Its Bhanitās have the poet's penname as 'Candraśekhara', which name is common in his independent songs. (c) *Pārijātaharaṇa*[13] (d) *Prabhāvatīharaṇa*[14] (c. 1656), (e) *Malayagandhinī*[15] (c. 1663)

11. Cat. No. (Durbars Library) I, 1564 pp. 1-50.
12. Ibid, I, 397 pp. 1-108, Beginning of the MS : हर चाँद तिलक धर चादशेखर बरनाम. End of the MS : जगत जननि पर हे थहि राखह दुहु जनक दुहु काय सम्वत् ७६० ॥
13. Ibid, I, 420 pp. 1-45.
14. Ibid. I, 395 pp 1-44, Beginning of the MS : प्रथमहि सुमरणो गुरु गणेश देथु अभय कर हरथु कलेश End of the MS : जगत्प्रकाश नृपति कर विनति जनम होउ तोर पदे मती इति श्री ने० सं० ७७६ ॥
15, Ibid, I, 436, pp. 1-86. Beginning of the MS : चंपक

and (f) *Madanacarita*[16] (1670). In the Library of Rajguru Hemaraja of Nepal there is a three-act *Rāmāyana-nāṭaka*[17] by one Kṛṣṇadāsa written in Jagatprakāśa's name. Some of these works seem to have been renewed in the subsequent years under Jagatprakāśamalla's successors.

They are all invariably in prose as well as verse. The prose pieces are small but they are sweet and pure :

सूत्रधार—हे प्रिये एतय आउ।

नटी—हे नाथ, हमर प्रणाम। की आज्ञा करै छिअ।

सूत्रधार—हे प्रिये श्रीश्रीजयजगतप्रकाशमल्लदेवक ज्येष्ठ राजकुमार श्रीश्रीजयजितामित्रमल्लक आज्ञा भेल अछि—

(*Madanacarita*)

—हे परवत मूर्त्ति, बिस्नुदास नाम वैष्णव थिकौं।

—से यथार्थ कहलो अछि

(*Malayagandhini*)

The Rājavarṇana in (*Malayagandhini*) is important because it praises Śrīnivāsamalla, the king's contemporary at Pāṭan.

चौदसह नरपति तोहर बखान।
त्रिभुवन महीपति सम नहि आन॥
निरमल मति शुभ्र गाँग जलचर।
गल गजराज मोति सुन्दर हार॥
चौष(श)ठि कलापर सरूपहि काम।
शवदेक शशीमूख बड अभिराम॥

मालति रूप त्रिभुवन सारे ये मे बसे एक ननु मेलहु बिहारे End of page 40 अपूर्व स्थान देखैन्छिअ एतए ...

•End of the MS : परमेश्वरीवा भावमे etc. A MS of this drama is also in the Library of Hemaraja Sharma, where its author is said to be one Kṛṣṇadāsa.

16. Dr. Bagchi *op. cit.* p. 175,

17. Ibid.

सूत्र०—हे प्रिये एहेन ,राजा श्रीश्रीनिवासमल्ल । तनिक जयवर्णना भक्तयुक्त राजा श्रीश्रीजगतप्रकाशमल्ल सतत करथि ।[18]

The songs in these drams are generally of the usual kind but now and then one comes across deep thoughts such as :

अथिर कलेवर कमलपातक जलबुले ।

भवन कनक जनरजत आदि जप थिर नहि रह सब जने ।

सुत मित सबधन सुख दुख सरि अथिर जानब मने ॥[19]

(*Madancarita*)

Sumati-Jitamitramalla (c. 1682-1697) was equally enthusiastic writer. The extant dramas written by him are : (*a*) *Káliyamathanopákhyána*[20] (1684) in three acts, (*b*) *Madalasaharanam*[21] (1687), (*c*) *Jaiminiyabharatanatakam*[22] (called *Asvamedhanatakam* according to MM. Haraprasada Sastri) (1690) (*d*) *Gopicandranatakam*[23] (1690) (*e*) *Usáharana*[24] (*f*) *Navadurgánatakam*[25] (1686) (*g*) *Bhásánatakam*[26] and (*h*

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Darbar Library, Nepal, Cat. No. I, 460 pp. 1-44 Beginning of the MS · कल्यान ॥ चा ॥ भावहु शङ्कर गौरी अरधङ्गा End of the MS : दूहू जनक दूहू काय ॥ नेपाल महीमण्डल महीपति श्रीश्रीसुमतिजयजितामित्रविरचिते कालीमथनोपाख्याननाटके तृतीयाङ्कम् सं० ८०४ ।

21. Ibid, I, 354 pp. 1-30 dated Samvat 807.

22. Ibid, I, 1121, pp. 1-21.

23. Dr. Bagchi. *op. cit.* p. 176.

24. Darbar Library, Nepal Cat. No. I, 1564.

25. Ibid, I, 1322, pp. 1-125. Beginning of the MS : मङ्गलं कारयेत् । नाटेश्वर पञ्चोपहार पूजयुको न सायं । क्ये पूजा पशु तर्पण ॥ तारथाया चके समठा विनदविसाया थको चेत सिन्दुर मव. End of the MS : ग्याते दश निकुहु सम्बत् ८०६ ।

26. Ibid, I, 1455, pp. 1-22.

Bhāratanāṭakam[27]. It is the longest of all. One peculiarity of his dramas is their catholic interest in many polite languages. Thus *Gopicandranataka* is in Bangali *Bhasanatakam* is partly in Newari, and the rest in Maithili. Almost all plays begin with a benediction to Ardhanariśvara (Lord Siva).

There is greater command over the language in the dramas of Jitāmitramalla than in those of his predecessors. Their ease and fluency can be gathered from the following specimen lines :

सकल स्वरूप हर तिनि नयन, तुश्र रवि शशि अनलहु मूल ।

(*Bharatanataka*).

विमल रहय शिव सुरसरिधार, नाचत मगन शशि शेखरा ।

सुमति जितामित्र कह नृप ईश, देखु सदाशिव अभयवरा ।[28]

(*Madalasaharana*).

कुवलयाश्व—प्रिय शुन इन्द्रमुखी तेज तोहे मान ।

तोरित अधर मधुदेह रतिदान ॥

तुश्र मम सीमन्तिनी न देखल आन ।

दरशने भेल मोर थाकिते पराण ॥[29]

(*Madalasaharana*).

After Jitāmitramalla's death, his son Bhupatindramalla (1695-1722) ascended the throne. He was the most prolific writer. We know of the following dramas written and staged during his reign : (a) *Mádhavánala*[30] (1704), (b) *Gaurívivákanataka*[31] (1706), (c) *Pasupatiprádurbháva*[32]

27. Ibid, I, 1478, pp. 1-128. On sixty-seventh page : अतः पर एहि हिमलिय महादेव के तपस्या करब. End of the MS : हमरो मनोरथ सम्पूर्ण भेल तेहि मोतियाय ॥

28. Dr. Bagchi, *op, cit.* p. 176.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid, p. 178-9 and Darbar Library Cat. No. I, 1455.

31. Darbar Library, Nepal, Cat No. I, 347. pp 1-100, dated Samvat 826.

32. Ibid, I, 460, pp. 1-86, dated Samvat 831.

(1711), (d) *Gopicandra*[33] (? 1712), (e) *Usáharana*[34] (1713), (f) *Rukminiparinaya*[35] (g) *Vidyávilápa*,[36] (h) *Mahabhárata*,[37] (i) and (j) Two unnamed fragments[38]—one of these was probably composed when the father of the king was alive (1695), for in the Rajavarṇana of it the father of the king is praised in high terms, (k) *Kamsabadhakrsnacarita*[39] (l) *Kolasurabadhopakhyana*,[40] (m) *Padmávatinataka*,[41] (n) *Jálandharopakhyana*[42] (o) *Jaiminiyabháratanataka*[43] and (p) *Manoranjananataka*.[44]

The language of some of these plays is Newari or Bengali. The *Usaharana*, one of the unnamed fragments on 'Ṣaḍdarśanas', and *Padmavatinatakam* are, for example, much mixed with Newari ; and *Gopicandropakhyananatakam* with Bengali.

The songs in his dramas are numerous and have a variety unknown to earlier dramatists. The following quotations will give some idea of their achievement :

तोहे प्रभु नागर सुगुण आगर, रूपे मदन समान।
तोरइं चउगुण कलाक आगर, रसिक गुणमय जान है।

33. Ibid, I, 345, pp. 1-75.

34. Ibid, I, 1132, pp. 1-81, dated Samvat 833.

35. Dr. Bagchi, *op. cit.* p. 179.

36. Published by Bangiya Sahitya Parishat, 243-9, Upper Circular Road, Calcutta (as *Nepále Báṅgalá Náṭaka*).

37. Ibid.

38. Dr. Bagchi, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

39. Darbar Library Nepal Cat, No. I, 1390.

40. Ibid, I, 331, pp. 1-85.

41. Ibid. I, 380.

42. Ibid, I, 404, 1-58.

43. Ibid, I, 453, pp. 1-235 Also called *Aśvamedha Náṭaka*.

44. Ibid, III, 576, pp. 1-128.

नारि अलपमति आन नाहि गति, कामे दहत शरीर।
जनम सफल कर आब पहु मोर, श्रीभूपतीन्द्र भन धीर हे॥

(Fragment of 1695)

अगाध जलधि-तट तरि नहि होथि। शिवक भवन विनु अओर न कोथि॥

(Rukminiparinaya)

As usual, small sentences intersperse these songs, such as:

—हे लोके सभास्थान आबय चलू।
—हे लोके सुनु।
—(सर्वे) महाराज आज्ञा करू।

(Mádhavánala)

—वेद पुराण नटने परिपूर नृप परसादे लोक बड़ शूर।
—केशि हमरहु मने तहने चलू।

(Jálandharopákhyána)

—जे हिमालयक एक पुत्री होअ से उपाय करू।

(Gaurívivaha)

—अहे शिष्य सकल अनेक तीर्थ देखिलों, अतः पर इ काशी छाड़िया अन्यत्र कदापि जाइ।

(Gopícandropákhyána)

(सूत्र॰ to नटी)—हे प्रिय एतय आउ।
—हे इन्द्र त्वरित विजय करू।

(Kolásurabdhopakhyana)

उग्र—हे लोके एहि प्रासाद मनाएक विश्राम करब।
सर्वे—महाराज अवश्य।

(Kamsabadhakrsnacaritra)

The *Mahábhárata* and the *Vidyávilápa* may be discussed at length. They have been published by the Bangiya Sahitya Parisad. They will illustrate the general nature of the "irregular" Nepalese Maithili drama at its best.

The *Mahábhárata* (1702) (with which poet Krsnadeva is associated) extends to twenty-three acts giving some of the famous Episodes of the great Epic. Vyása and Sañjaya are also made

to appear on the stage to summarise the narrative. The action is reported or described in the songs. The way in which any incident of the *Mahábhárata* is handled is illustrated by the following lines describing the 'Khāṇḍavadāha' episode Act VII :

कृष्ण, अर्जुन, अग्नि, पैसार ॥
एहने बाचव, मा ।
आसावरि ॥ चौ ॥
आज खाण्डववन कराओब दाह ।
होयत अगिनिक उच्छाह ॥ मेपू १४० ॥

खाण्डवदाह ॥
इन्द्रोक्ति—युद्ध ॥
दाहको, मा ॥
पर्हिडका ॥ ख ॥
कओने दरपे तोहे कराओब दाह ।
तुरित करब हमे तुअ मुख स्याह ॥ मेपू १४१ ॥
अर्ज्जुनोक्ति– युद्ध ॥
राग तार ऐ० ॥
सुरपति न कह हम सओ आजि ।
सुनो रे तोह तह कि होयत आजि ॥ मेपू १४२ ॥

कृष्णार्ज्जुन आनन्द निस्सार ॥
प्रिय आय, मा ॥
धूरिबा मल्लाल ॥ प्र ॥ चो ॥
आनन्दे जायब तुरिते ॥ ध्रु ॥
अर्जुन मेल धनंजय काज,
चल आवे अपनुक धामे ।
जितल समर ह सुरराज,
पाओल आयुध अभिरामे ॥ मेपू १४३ ॥

इति [45]

At the end of the Mahābhārata war Dhṛtarāṣtra is made to lament thus :

45. *Nepâle Bâhgalâ Nâṭaka*, p. 66.

धृतराष्ट्रादिविलाप

हा भायि, मा ॥

भरुआरि ॥ चो ॥

भ्रात ओ तनय मोहि तेजि कहु गेल, कवल नाक पवान ।

विफल भेल अवे हमर जनम ।

नहि जाथि अन्छ मोर प्राण ॥

सुयोधन जिवन अधार ॥ ध्रु ॥

वूढ वयस हमे पावल शोक,

हरि हरि के करत त्राण ।

करम(ल) लिखल फल दुर(ल) नहि जाव,

जय भूपतीन्द्र नृपभान ॥ १६ मेपू ४४६ ॥[46]

The story of *Vidyávilápa* (1720)[47] was one of the most popular themes in Medieval India. Kumara Ganganandsinha has thus summarised it :

"In Ujjain, there was a king named Virasimha. He had a daughter called Vidyavati. She was a very talented girl and had taken a vow of marrying that person who would defeat her in discussion. Many princely suitors came and went away disappointed. Her father became very anxious on her account and decided to try prince Sundara, who was reported to be a very learned man. He sent his court-poet to the royal court of King Gunasindhu of Kanchi, the father of prince Sundara, for the purpose of inviting the prince to his court Prince Sundara had also, on the other hand, heard of the beauty and accomplishments of Vidyavati and secretly wished to woo her. He came to Ujjain without any body's knowledge and pitched up his residence at the house of the garland girl of the king. On becoming intimate with her the prince told her his mind and sought her help in the affair. She contrived to bring both Sundara and Vidyavati together and from the first sight both of them became enamoured of each other. But they did not find their course of love smooth. The king and the queen of Ujjain came to know of the

46. Ibid, 21st Act, p. 138.

47. Published in *Nepâle Bâṅgalâ Nâṭaka*. See f.n. 36 above.

> clandestine visits, and the lovers were caught. Sundara was brought before the king and was sentenced to the punishment of a thief. But subsequently the court poet, who had gone to Kanchi, returned and told the king that the captive was no other than prince Sundara, the son of King Gunasindhu. Upon this the kidg immediately released him from captivity and united him with his daughter in marriage."[48]

He goes on to add :

> "This story has its origin probably in the Chaurapanchaśika. Sundara, the hero of the story, is, according to some, the Chaura Kavi himself, to whom the authorship of the Chaurapañchaśika is ascribed. There are others, however, who say that the work was the work of Vararuchi, a Maithil scholar. Sriyuta Bharat Chandra Roy wove the story into a fine poem and it became a favourite study of both the old and the young in Bengal. Maharaja Yatindramohan Tagore utilised the story to form the plot of his play Vidyasundara and the celebrated Hindi poet Bharatendu Harischandra borrowed materials from it for his work bearing the same title."[49]

Th play is in seven acts (spread out into seven days' performance ?), and has ample scope to develop the character of the dramatis personae. The unities of time and place are ignored. The Sūtradhāra does not linger on the stage. Songs embodying stage-directions are frequent, *e.g.*, when Gunasāgara and others enter then the following lines are sung :

गुणसागरादि प्रवेश ॥
कन्हर ॥ एकतालि ॥
सागरकुलगुण गुणक निधान ।
विदितभुवनतरकेओ नहि आन ॥
कलावति प्रिया सङ्गे करब प्रवेश ।
अनुपम अच्छ मोर रत्नापुरि देश ॥

48. JASB New Series XX 1924, p. 73,
49. Ibid, p. 74,

नृप भूपतिमपरत कमल वदन ।
नीति विनयगुण बहे भूप वान ॥ मेघू ६ ॥[50]

and when they go away,

गुण सागरादि निस्तार ॥...
आनन्दे आवव चद्दू कलावति
अपन नगरि रहि करव समाव.....:[51]

In the extant text there are hardly any prose passages as in "regular" dramas; it seems they were left to the actors' choice. The orchestra are introduced as गायनीप्रवेश and गायनीनिस्तार.

There are portions in this play which owe their attraction to their references to everyday life, such as, the washerwoman in the Fourth Act.

The songs are generally laconic and even cryptic, which make a mere reading of the text not very intelligible or pleasant. Now and then they are interspersed with continuous passages which, however, develop the thought and action as well as provide occasion for entertaining songs (e. g., the dialogues between the she-gardener (mālini) and the young hero).

Some of the songs, such as the Maheśavāṇis and other familiar lyric-types are extremely successful. On the occasion of a marriage a 'Kobara' was sung as in modern Mithila:

कोबर, मे

धनाश्री ॥ ज ॥

बहेने (बेहने ?) गौरी महेश, मापि हे,
दुहु मेलाह बाघर (ग्रधर ?) देह ।
विद्यादेवी(वी) सुन्दर वेशा ।

50. *Nepāle Bāṅgalā Nāṭaka*, p. 3.

51. Ibid, p. 4.

इहू वाढ़्को मेव म॰मेपू १०।
गावनी शान्ति फाकं ॥ मेपू १०२ ॥[52]

The apogee of Nepalese Maithili Drama was reached in the long reign of Raṇajitamalla (c. 1722-1772). He was the last ruler of the line, and we learn of the largest number of plays written under him. Their names are: (a) *Krsnacarita*[53] (1738) (b) *Krsnakailás yátropákhyana*[54] (1747), (c) *Usáharana*[55] (1754), in nine Acts), (d) *Indrajayanátakam*[56] (1764), (e) *Mánahátryopakhyána*[57] (1764), (f) *Kolásurabadhopákhyána*[58] (1766), (g) *Khatvásurabadhopakhyána*[59] 1767), (h) *Andhakásurabadhopakhyana*[60] (1768) (i) *Krsnacaritropákhyana*[61] (j) *Madanacarita*[62] (k) *Rámáyananataka*,[63] (l) *Rámacarita*,[64] (m) *Mádhavánalakámakandalá*[65] (n) *Nalacarita*[66] [by one Ganesa who is also mentioned in (1)], (o) *Rukminiparinaya*[67] (in five

52. Ibid, p. 33.

53. Darbar Library, Cat. No. I, 368, pp. 1-132, dated Samvat 858.

54. Ibid, III, 116, pp. 1-32, dated Samvat 867.

55. Ibid, I, 365, pp. 1-105, dated Samvat 874.

56. Ibid, I, 365, pp. 1-151, dated Samvat 884.

57. Ibid, I, 365, pp. .-59, dated Samvat 824.

58. Ibid, late discovery no No. pp. 1-78, dated Samvat 886,

59. Ibid, I, 365, pp. 1-26, dated Samvat 887.

60. Dr. Bagchi, *op. cit.* p. 180.

61. Darbar Library Cat. No. I, 365, pp. 1-11.

62. Dr. Bagchi, *op. cit.* p. 180.

63. Ibid.

64. Published in *Nepâle Bâṅgalâ Nâṭaka*. See above f.n. 36.

65. Ibid, The name of a poet Dhanapati is also associated with this drama.

66. Library of Rajaguru Hemaraja Sharma,

67. Ibid, II, Kha.

Acts), (p) *Rukminiharana*[68] (q) *Jalasayivisnvadistastyupákhyána*,[69] (r) *Tripurásurabadhopakhyánanátakam*[70] and (s) *Prthúpákhyána*.[71]

Most of these were composed in the honour of his istadevatā (Personal Deity) : the *Usáharana* was staged on the occasion of the repairs of Her temple, the *Andhakásurabadhopákhyána* to propitiate Her, the *Krsna-caritanátaka* to commemorate the occasion of instituting a bigger bell in Her temple, and the *Kolásurabadhopákhyána* to celebrate the occasion of adorning Her with blue lotuses.

Some of these dramas are mixed with Bengali. For example, *Krsnakailásayátropákhyána*, *Rámáyana* and *Rámacarita* are mostly in Bengali.

The distinguishing quality of these dramas is the frequent use of prose :

(रानी) शशिरेखा--हे प्राणनाथ हमरो विनती शुन ।

अंधकासुर—प्रियतमा कहु ।

भीमानन्द (मंत्री)--हे दानवाधिप हमरो विनती अवधान करू।

अंध०--भीमानन्द कहु ।

(*Andhkásurabadhopákhyána*).

—प्रिये तोहे हमर पुरुब जन्मक घरनी थिकी, हमर चित्त लागल किछु कहए सुनु प्राणनाथ, हमकी कहब ।

(*Rukminiparinaya*)

The plot of *Mádhavánala-Kámakandala* is very much similar to that of *Vidyávilápa*. It is also based upon a very popular legend. Its story is thus summarised by Kumara Gangānand Sinha :

68. Ibid.
69. Darbar Library, Nepal, Cat. No. I, 365, pp. 1-54.
70. Ibid, III, 116, pp. 1-27.
71. Ibid, I, 365, pp. 1-35.

"King Govindachandra of Pushpavati City had in his service a Brahmin boy named Madhavanala. He was exceedingly handsome, well-versed in music and arts and a favourite of all. This excited the jealousy of the courtiers, who influenced the king to banish him from his kingdom. But the king did so, by showing him all marks of honour. Madhavanala went to the city of Kamavati. When he reached the gate of the palace, he heard the music that flowed from the minstrels accompanying the courtesan Kamakandala in her dance. On listening to it Madhavanala remarked that the court was full of ignorant people as it allowed the man playing at mridanga to go on, although he was not keeping time for want of his right-hand thumb. The door-keeper reported the fact to the king. Curiosity led him to know what it was, and he found that it was a truth. The king then immediately called him to the court and treated him with every mark of honour. The dance went on. It kept the spectators enchanted. At this inopportune moment a wasp bit the breast of Kamakandala. For fear lest the dance be spoilt, she managed to scare it away with the air of her breath. No one noticed it except Madhavanala. He became exceedingly pleased and did not hesitate a single moment to present her in open court with all the gifts that had been offered to him by the king. But the king took it as an insult and the Brahmin was ordered to leave his kingdom at once. He, however, got a very high place in the estimation of Kamakandala. She kept him in her house for some time, before he left the city and both of them became exceedingly endeared to each other. When they separated, they did so with a heavy heart and many promises of mutual love and fidelity. At first Madhavanala had no fixed destination. On his way, however, he met a man who was going to the court of Kamavati with a problem (समस्या) from King Vikramaditya of Ujjain. Madhavanala solved it and proceeded to Ujjain. On reaching there he wrote a love-letter to Kamakandala and received a suitable reply. Madhavanala became greatly distracted in mind when he read in it the sorrows of a truly afflicted heart. He went over to the temple of Mahakala and passed his night there. As a means to lighten his heart, he wrote a couple of verses on a piece of paper. They clearly expressed the emotions of his heart. On the next day King Vikramaditya, when he came to worship the god,

> saw them, and became interested in finding out their author. The quest was unsuccessful. He met with the same incident on the subsequent day. But on this occasion he succeeded with the help of his courtesans in finding out Madhavanala, the author of those stray verses. To test his love, King Vikramaditya made him believe that Kamakandala was dead. Madhavanala died of grief. The king then secretly went to Kamakandala and broke to her the news of Madhavanala's death. She also died at this terrible news. The king then realised the situation and asked his vampire to bring the lovers to life and effect their union. And it was done."

He goes on to add:

> "Like that of विद्याविलाप this story too had a very wide circulation. We know of its antiquated manuscripts being available in Nepal, Mithila and Bengal and it has also been treated in a dramatic form by Sanskrit and Hindi authors"[72]

The element of surprise finds some place in this play, but on the whole its style is of the usual kind. A specimen is given below:

कामन्द्रोक्ति—दृएडक ॥
कामन्दिर, मा
कराहि र ॥
देखइ बन सम गेह ।
मोहि न देअइ पहु कय अतिनेह ॥
जओ निठु गुन मोर न हत देह ॥
सुनिअ बिनति सब ॥
विहि देल दारुण,
से(प)ह नलपल बनि हिय निय नहि ।
वेदन बुझित निय पर एक सेह ॥
मनथि भीरखजित सेह ।
जिवधरम और कजेह कव सेह ॥ मेपू ८१ ॥
माधवोक्ति—दृएडक ॥
नरपति मा ॥

72. JASB New Series, XX 1924, pp. 74-5.

मइंठी ॥ व ॥
तुम अब कम्रो नृप कोप होब बहु
त (जो) मन आइबे दूर ।
होअ नहि तेशि जन थिरि अतिफूर ॥
शिव ॥ शिव ॥
थनि है काहि कहु मव तुअ दूरे ॥ ध्रु ॥
कमलिनी अनि जल विवश्रो चेतल पल ।
कि कव तपव नहि फल ॥
तुअ रव कुमविश्र तेह होअ फुर ।
सने गुणिभनथि भीरखवितशूर ॥
अपन समीहिव विहिश्रो न पूर ॥ मेपू ८२ ॥[73]

At Kathamandu

The court of Kāthamāndu was founded by Ratnamalla, the youngest son of Yakṣamalla (c 1474). His son Amaramalla introduced seven kinds of dances and encouraged other artistic things in Nepal. His grandson Narendramalla (c. 1551), and his successors Mahendramalla (c. 1566) and Sadāśivamalla (c. 1575-6) are known to have patronised no particular dramatist. After the death of Sadāśivamalla we begin to get more and more records of this branch. Sadāśivamalla (also known as Sivasiṁhā) had a younger son, Hariharasiṁhamalladeva. In the latter's reign the kingdom was divided into two sub-divisions. (i) Rājās of Kāntipura or Kāṭhamāndu, and (ii) Rājās of Lalitapura or Pāṭan.

1. *Rájás of Kantipura (or Kaṭhamandu)*

The branch that established itself at Kāthamāndu proper was led by Lakṣminara(nṛ)-siṁhamalla. His successor Pratāpamalladeva (1639-1689) was an important ruler. He defeated Siddhinar(nṛ)siṁhamalla of the rival branch of Lalitapura or Pāṭan. He had two

73. *Nepāle Bāṅgalā Nāṭaka* p. 233-234.

queens from Mithilā, Rūpamatī,[74] (a sister of Prāṇanārāyaṇa and daughter of Vīranārāyaṇa, son of Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa and grandson of Prince Nārāyaṇa, whose capital was at Vicāranagarī (?) and the other Rājamatī, and invited many Maithila Pandits, and learned many things from them.

"He composed prayers for different Pīṭha-devatās of Nepal, and after getting them inscribed on stones, placed them in many holy places, such as Pashupati, etc......He made a beautiful image of Nrityanatha.........[75] "......" he composed many verses and set them (to music)......and inscribed his name on his coinage, with the affix Kavīndra (poet) and obtained great celebrity[76]". "In this reign a Tirahutia Brāhamṇa by name Narsiṁha Thākura, who had for three years repeated the mantra of Narasiṁha and thereby secured his aid when needful, came to Kantipura.. ......the Raja gave him the title of Guru [77]"

It was in his court that Vaṁśamaṇi Jha[78] flourished. He was the son of one Rāmacandra Jha of Bhāradvāja-gotra and of Beloñce-Mūla (Family). He was the author of several works on music at the court of Jaggajjyotirmalla of Bhaktapura, such as *Sangítabháskara* (1631). We know of two of his Maithili dramas: the *Gítadigambara*[79] (1655) preserved in the Durbar Library and the *Muditamadálasá* in the Library of Rajaguru Hemarāja Sarmā.

The *Gítadigambara* was composed on the occasion of Raja Pratāpamalla's '*Mahátuládána*'.

74. I A IX pp 184-188.

75. Wright, *History of Nepal*, p. 214-15.

76. Ibid.

77. Ibid.

78. Wrongly called Vaṅgamaṇi Jha in *Nepal Cat.*; also author of a long Kāvya in Sanskrit called *Kṛsna-Kávya* (Darbar Library, Nepal, Cat. No. I, 427). In his songs he echoes frequently Vidyāpati's poems.

79. *Nepal Cat.* A copy of the MS. is in our possession too.

The play is of the 'regular' type and is divided into four Acts. It proceeds gradually from शुविलमोह (Act I), to मानिनीमानभंग (Act II), शिरकमिलाप (Act III) and कामकामेश्वर (Act IV). The story of Śiva's enticement by Pārvati is very familiar and the main attraction of his treatment lies in the vernacular songs. There are quite a few hymns to Śiva as simple and as dignified as the one which he gives in the beginning of his play:

आध मौलिमण्डन फुलमाले,
आध तरङ्गित सुरसरि धारे।
आध अलिक तिलक नव इन्दु,
आध सोहाओ सिन्दुर बिन्दु।
कोमल विकट दुहुचारी,
अपुरुब नाच करथि त्रिपुरारी।
एकदेह अधपूरुष दारा,
तेँतिसकोटि देव देखन हारा।
सुकवि वंशमणिए सुर गावे,
सेवि देव हर की नहि पावे।

The suggestiveness of his style is seen in the following (Māna):

करह उनत इथि मुख अरविंदा रे।
धरि भए उगओ गगन दुइ चंदा रे।
चिबुक बेथरब हेरह मधु बिला रे।
कुवलय पाँति फुलओ दह दिसा रे।
तरलनि तनिहा रिबो नह (?) मिठुवानि रे।
बरिसह....बिमुखा मधुबानि रे।
रहलि विभावरि रस अबसान रे।
तेजह अकारण मरदन मान रे।
सुकवि वंशमणि एहु रस गाब रे।
अइन बनचन (वाचन?) काहि नहि भाब रे।[80]

Pratāpamalla was followed by Mahīndra-(or Bhupālendra)malla (1689-1694) under whom

80. MS. p. 8,

one drama, *Nalacaritanátaka*, (1682) alone is known to have been written. Dr. P. C. Bagchi quotes a specimen from it :

तेरो बदन मानो शशधर
मेरो नयन चकोरा।
देखत मोहए अधिक सोहए
कहहु बचन मेरा।
देखितै सुन्दर चपल लोचन
काजर शोभा री।
मनो पङ्कज भमर सोहत
पवन से लघुचारी।
पार्थिवेन्द्रसुत नृप 'भूपालेन्द्र' कहत
एहो बिचारी।
उचित समय मिलहुँ नागरि
पति से मति समारी॥[81]

His successor Śrī-Bhāskara-Malla-Deva (1694-1702) is not known to have done anything for Maithili, but his grandson, Jagajjayamalla (1702-1732), seems to have patronised Maithili at his court. The *Abhinavaprabodhacandrodaya*[82] written under him is an adaptation of the Sanskrit work *Prabodhacandrodaya* ; its language is however mixed with Bengali. The last ruler of this line was Jayaprakāsamalla (1739-1778).

2. *Rájás of Lalitapura or Pátana*

This line of Rājās is said to have been founded by the younger son of Hariharasiṁhadeva. From the point of view of Maithili it was more flourishing branch than the former. The son of Hariharasiṁhamalla was the famous

81. *Op. cit.* p. 182.

82. Darbar Library, Nepal, Cat, No. I, 1154, pp. 1-7, and III, 565, pp. 1-164. End of the MS : सम्वत् नेपाले रस-वसुविधु मास पौषशुक्ल शुभदिने चतुर्दशी वारे वारतो अमरगुरु पुनर्वसु

king Siddhi-Narasingha-Deva (1620-1657)[83]. Under him was composed in 1651 the famous drama *Hariscandranrtyam*[84]. "The story of the plot is essentially the same as that of *Candakausika*....The appearance of Sanskrit limits itself to a few verses with the introduction of high personages and has influence on the instrumentalation and melody of songs ..." Mr. Augustus Conrady has examined the language of it and has come to the conclusion that it is Maithili, sometimes mixed with Bengali and, sometimes with Hindi—but "with the modern Nepali it has nothing to do." The characters in this play are the famous truthful hero Hariścandra, his wife Madanāvatī and his son Rohidāsa. It is full of dramatic interest throughout.

The following is quoted as a specimen scene :

रोहिदास—हहे ऋषीश्वर, हमार वचन अवधान हो ॥ शश्लो (श्लोक ?) ॥

विषा द्विपतरं चैव न पिबामि कदाचन ।

द्विजस्य दक्षिणा यावत शाम्यति ॥

पितार आज्ञा बिनु केहे जलपान करिबो । मरण हैने कोन दुख ॥

ऋषिमा—हरि२, एहन सुकुमार बालक, एहन प्राणान्त विषय (जे) जलपान न करै छथि हरि ५ ॥ एमरथा सुन विधाता हमार के वद अकाजब वेर छथि ई बालकक शरीर जैसे सुवर्ण अग्नि जको दाहक पैर, तैसे तन्हिका शरीर दाह मेर तथापि सत्य भंग किंचित नहि मेरा, तकरा एहन दुख देखि कहु ओकरा क वद दया है गेर, कतेक दुदैंव (कतेक दुःदेव) सुरुज का किरण निवारण करब ।

When the Rājā goes to serve a 'doma' he is asked :

83. See above pt. II, Chapter VI.

84. Edited by Augustus Conrady, 1891. I have quoted extracts from its English translation in MS. in possession of Narendranathadasa, Village, Sakhwar, P. O. Manigachi, Dist., Darbhanga. A poet called Damodara is associated with this play as is clear from its last verse.

का (सरोस) ॥ हम जे कार्लत्रिक थिक तोहि के थिक ?

हम जे शोभत्र थिक तोहे अपसंत्रा की कायते ?

रा(जा) ॥ मोहि आवरा जे एक कहिंआ सोकिते आवह ॥

का० ॥ दन्हिका मूल की थिकः मूल कह १ मन बो नेब तिन्हकरा मूल (मूह ?) जे चारीस भार सुवर्ण, लेड ॥

In the End the Ṛṣi gets angry and demands his dakṣiṇā thus:

—असुरे (असुर की ?) पापि, रे निर्वंशं, आद(ह)ह कतेक जंजार(ल) करहुथि तोहे न फल जे हमरा अवश्य काज नहि थिक, आउ मोर दक्षिणा देउ ॥

राजा ॥ अहे मुनीश्वर अमी की करिबो जे तुम्हार आज्ञा से अमाके निश्चय हरि२ ॥

कोराव ॥ ए ॥

अवे कि करइ धनि न जाब परा।

स(श)त रोमे बिकनि करिह मवदान ॥

अकुल दिवस धनि मवगेरि रात ।

जीव उपर विधि कि करिति सात ॥

सुत रोहिदास अकुल नहि न सात ।

हमहु वेचर(ल) मुनि कपरा हात ॥

'दामोदर' भनेन कर राज ।

स(श)त हरिचन्द गगन तुव राज ॥

The Rājā recognizes his dead son and wife thus:

राजा—अहे चोरिनी(णि) तुम ॥......

कतवक हरिचन्द के तुअ जाति । कहि गेल अकुल हमर किसान ।

रानी—राय हरिचन्द बेचिय हम गेर । दुनसन्ताप दुख दव गेर एहि बेतवा के कथ आस ।...अहे महा पुरुष हमी राजा हरिश्चन्द्रेर की मदनावती अछि । हमार अभाग्यते परेर दासिनी हैरो अग्निसंस्कार करिवार पुत्र निवा अमी आमि अग्निते जाववो ।

॥ रानी जाव ॥

राजा—हरि२ देव(वे) हमाके कतेक विपत्ती दिले हम जे चण्डारेर दास हैरो, एहि हमार पुत्र रोहिदास अछि, मनावती ते आमाके ना चिन्हिहो ।

हाव १, ग्रमी कवने [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ,[illegible] २॥ [illegible] [illegible] ॥ रोहिदास ऐसेन करम [illegible] ।.........[illegible] हमर एतेक विपत्ति हेरो मदनावती ते [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ।

The play ends in the āśirvāda to Siddhinarasingha.

Śrīnivāsamalla (1657-1701) ascended the throne after Siddhinarasinghadeva. He extended the period of dancing in Kārttika, and was himself a poet. We know of one drama at his court called *Lalitakuvalayāśva.*

His great-great grandson Viṣṇusiṁhamalla (c. 1737) is the author of a *Uṣāharaṇa-Nataka or Kṛṣṇacaritra* (a long One-Act play) preserved in the Library of Rājaguru Hemrāja Śarmā of Nepal.

Henceforth, this court was generally under either the Rājās of Bhaktapura or those of Kāntipura.

At Banikapura (Vanepa or Vanapat)

This collateral line was established by the second son of Yakṣamalla (c. 1474), Jayaraṇamalla. Jayaraṇamalla ruled for about 21 years and invited four Maithila Brāhmaṇas to his court. The line, however, lasted only for a century. By the time of Jagatprakāśamalla and his successor Jitāmitramalla it seems that this line had shrunk into insignificance. We know of only one writer Jayarāmadatta[85] of Vanepa who composed in 1496 a drama called *Pāṇḍavavijaya* (or *Sabhāparvanāṭaka*) [86]

85. Jayarāma is also the name of a contemporary of Vidyāpati, See above Part II Chap. VI.

86. *The Indian Stage* by Hemendranatha Dasagupta, 1934, Vol. I, p. 164.

IV

CONCLUSION

The end of this extremely active period in Mediaeval Maithili Literature came in 1768—though as Dr. U. Mishra says, the interest in Maithili did not completely disappear from Nepal[87]. The main cause of this end was the political upheaval by the coming of Gurkha king Prithvinārāyaṇa Shah (1768-1775). The arrival of the Gurkhas meant the introduction of Gurkha-Bhāṣā in the court and the decline of Maithili. Moreover a number of years the Gurkha kings were more engaged in consolidating themselves than in patronising arts and letters, and hence the literary tradition of these courts was broken for the time being.

Before we pass on to certain concluding observations, it is necessary to point out that a number of Nepalese dramas are still unclassi fied and therefore difficult to be placed in their proper sequel. They are: *Niskanataka* and *Sabhátarangini* (in the Cambridge University Library), *Krsnacaritranataka*, *Dikpálopákhyána*, *Bhásásamskrtanatakam*, *Mudávatiharananataka*, *Mudrárákṣasakathá*, *Múladeva-Sasidevopákhyánam*, *Yayátyupakhyánam*, *Ratnesvarapradurbhávopákhyanamnataka*, one fresh *Rámacaritanataka*, *Ramabhisekanataka*, *Rámáyana-Hanumananatakadi-Prakirnam*, *Vikranea-caritanatakam*, *Viradhvajopakhyananatakam*, *Samrohini-upakhyanam*, *Srikhandacaritanataka*, *Subrehmanyopákhyánam* and *Haragánakathá* in Nepal and about ten or twelve dramas in various libraries of Europe.[88]

87. See *Hindustani*, article on "Nepala Drama", *op. cit.*

88. Information gleaned from note added to Dr. Bagchi's article *op. cit.*, by Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji, and from the catalogue of Darbar Library, Nepal.

There were three influences working during this period. In the first place, the Sanskrit drama acted as the model frame-work; secondly, the Yatra type of drama gave life and movement; and thirdly: the tradition of Mithila school of music directly initiated these vernacular dramas. The outcome was consequently of three kinds, one, was 'regular' Maithili drama where the form of Sanskrit drama was preserved but the language was more or less Maithili; the second was the kind of drama where some incident in the life of Kṛṣṇa or any other popular hero was described in the form of extempore dialogues interspersed with popular songs; the third was an independent kind of opera—like drama—mainly made up of secular songs. In the last two types the main interest was in the music of the piece; naturally their 'literary' and 'poetic' excellence was not very great.

The theatre in Nepal was a sort of repertory of professional drama where the old and popular themes were frequently renewed. The actors utilised the services of the dramatist to provide them with a popular theme on which they could exercise their faculties of Nṛtya and Saṅgīta. The training of an average actor was guided by such works as *Hastaprakáraṇī-rūpaṇam*, *Srihastamuktávalí*, *Khisamavádyasikṣá* and other manuals of acting and singing.

At a time when the Musalmans had dominated the nation and Mithila herself had not been able to produce what it ultimately did produce, it was only in the secluded courts of Nepal that dramatic activity could develop according to the native wisdom and talent. Thanks to the Newari copyists, we are today able to have a glimpse of their intense activity. It is hoped that a more sustained search for MSS in Nepal will give a complete picture of the vernacular dramatic literature.

CHAPTER VIII

THE KIRTANIYA DRAMA OF MITHILA

INTRODUCTORY

In Mithila proper there is no evidence of any great dramatic activity in the vernacular till the installation of the Khaṇḍvalākula to power in 1557. Mahārāja Subhankara Thākura (1583/4-1619/20) son of Mahārāja Maheśa Thākura (? 1557—70/1) was the author of several works on acting and dancing.[1] There may have been many more treatise written by contemporary scholars on these subjects, but they are not available to us at present.

It is possible that independent of the court, traditions of dancing and acting might have flourished in the rural areas, of which we have such vivid account in the work of Jyotirīśvara (c. 1324). But the centre of literary and aristocratic drama definitely shifted to the quiet and secluded courts of Nepal after the extinction of the Oinivāra Dynasty (c. 1527).

Before coming to an actual examination of the plays that came to be staged in a set fashion, it is necessary to refer briefly to the conditions of the stage in Mithila. It is, however, not possible to make any detailed analysis at present; for, there are no adequate memoirs and histories of the various centres of professional acting. All that we can do is to gather certain facts and traditions of the pre-

1. e.g. *Srīhastamuktāvalī* (MMC II) and a Nrotya work in the Library of Hemaraja Sharma, Nepal.

sent centres—such as, at Haṭī under the leadership of Babujana Nāyaka, at Lagamā under Ajabalāla Jhā, at Ālāpura under Khusidāsa, at Sarisava and Ganhavāri, at Śerapura under Umākānta Jhā, etc.[1A]

A group of actors in Mithila was known as 'Jamāti'. Its leader was called the 'Nāyaka', and he played the role of the Sūtradhāra and the hero (generally Kṛṣṇa or Hara). There were no female actors but the parts of women were impersonated by male actors. There was no restriction of caste or sub-caste in the choice of actors for a centre. Indeed, the Brāhmaṇa, the Kāyastha, the Camara and the Dusadha equally enjoyed and participated in a 'Jamāti'.

The Nāyaka was also the convener. Though the actors used to charge remuneration for their performance,[2] yet they were never solely dependant on it for their subsistence. During marriages, Upanayanas, Durgotsavas or other important social or religious occasions, the Nāyaka was invited to get performed a Kīrtaniyā drama at some public place or private household. At times the Nāyaka took his troupe to the royal court as well—unfortunately no details about the etiquette and the form of acting at the court are available.

The main qualification of a successful actor was to sing the 'Māna', the 'Nacārī', the 'Tirhuti' etc., and to have a general proficiency

1A. I am indebted for the following information mainly to Pt. Ṛddhinatha Jha, Principal, Lohana Vidyapitha, Lohana Road, Dist. Darbhanga, and to the Introduction of Narendranathadasa to his edition of Ramapati's *Rukminiharana* MS, Village Sakhwar, P. O. Manigachi, Dist. Darbhanga.

2. The 'Jamāti' used to get from Rs. 2, to Rs. 4 per performance and food for the night; sometimes they used to enter into a kind of annual contract (बोरा) too.

in gesticulation. Their attempt to impersonate a particular character was not very realistic. Most things were either taken for granted or were symbolically represented through accepted conventions.

There were in Mithila several kinds of actors and the Kirtaniyā actors formed only a particular group of them. They were called 'Kīrtaniyā' actors because their main aim was to present dramatic performances in praise of the Lord (Kīrtana). The vogue of this name must have come very late; for the *Varnaratnákara* does not mention it. It appears that the use of Kṛṣṇa's or Śiva's stories in such successful dramas as the *Usáharana*, *Párijáta-harana*, and *Rukminíharana* and the *Gaurísva-yamvara* led to this nomenclature. Some people believe that Umāpati Upādhyāya was the founder of 'Kīrtaniyā' drama in Mithila and that he used to sing and dance before Kṛṣṇa's image. In spite of all this, the example of 'Yātrās' and 'Kīrttans' of Bengal and Assam might have been responsible for giving this name to Medieval Maithili drama in Mithila.

The Kirtaniyā performances were held at night. The stage was a simple platform. The Sutradhāra used to make his appearance first after the Nāndī-Pāṭha. His usual costumes[3] were a 'Jāmā,' a 'Nīmā,' and a 'Payjāmā.' He used to wear a pair of sandals called 'Padukkā.' He covered himself in a wrapper and put on his head the old-fashioned Sāṭhā Pāga (=a national cap of Mithila supposed

3. Cf. Narendranathadasa's Introduction to Maithili Stage : नायक 'जामा', 'नीमा', 'पैजामा' पहिरि पदुक्का बान्हि चद्दरि ओढि साठा पाग माथ पर राखि फुलहथ्था हाथमे लय साधारण नृत्य टांगि कए बनल बनाओल रंगमंच पर नान्दी पाठक पश्चात् 'अलमतिविस्तरेण कहैत प्रवेश करैत छलाह'।

to be of sixty hands in length and bespeaking respectability). He had in his hand a rod known as 'Phulahaththā'. He was generally accompanied by his wife the 'Naṭī,' and generally introduced the occasion, the author and the play to the audience. He took pride in showing his scholarship and knowledge of "learned" things.[4]

The number of actors at any particular centre was small. The dramatis personae was given usually at the very beginning of a play in the form of a Praveśa song. The Nāyaka the Nāyika, the Sakhīs (two or three), Nārada (as a negotiator घटक) and the Vipaṭā (Vidūṣaka) formed the stock characters of a Kīrtaniyā party. Sanskrit, and (sometimes) Prākṛta, continued to be used in dialogues and stage-directions. For the rest, everything was conveyed through vernacular songs and verses (dohās). There was very rarely prose passages and dialogues in these plays. If any action was to be shown on the stage which needed detailed performance, such as Pāravatī's penance, or a battle, generally a description of it was sung on the stage.

There used to be Mss. of the plays ('stage copies' of the plays) which the actors committed to memory. We do not know if in medieval drama 'parts' were ever regularly rehearsed, but we do have evidence to show that scholars were specially asked to prepare the actors for appearing before the assembly of the learned.

4. Ibid : "अपन विद्वत्ताक प्रदर्शनक हेतु नान्दीक मंगलश्लोक क आवश्यकताक शास्त्रीय विवेचन तथा गद्यवार्त्तालाप अन्यतमात्र आदिक (अछुहो-पछुहो) बौछार करैत नाट्यकला कलापक परिचय देत छलाह। प्राचीन 'पारिजातहरण' क पुरना बसहा कागत पर लिखल एक प्रति एक कीर्त्तनियाक घर मे हम प्राप्त कएलहुँ अछि तहि ग्रन्थक.. ...अवतरण हमर कथन क तथ्य......स्पष्ट करैछ।"

For example, in modern times, Harṣanātha Jha, Gaṇanātha Jha, Raghunandanadāsa, Yadunandana Jha and Kapileśvara Jha used to train Kīrtaniyā actors. The orchestra was specially trained in the Nāradīya form of musical Kīrttana.

The audience was composed of the most learned as well as of the most illiterate. The common aim of both kinds of visitors was to derive entertainment.[5] Besides music, vocal and instrumental, there was the fun of the Vipaṭā, the beautiful songs of the Nāyikā, the rough attempts to bring such machines as the Garuḍa,[6] the

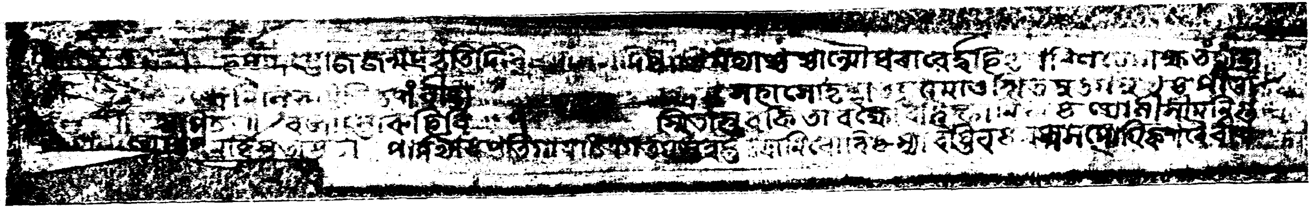
5. Bhuvaneśvara Singha "Bhuvana" thus explains the influence of the audience on later Kīrtaniyā Drama:

यह बात निर्विवाद है कि मिथिला के ये छोटे छोटे नाटक इन नटों की परिधि को दृष्टि में रखकर अभिनय की आवश्यकताओं की पूर्ति के लिये लिखे गये। साथ ही सर्वसाधारण विशेषतः महिला दर्शकों के बोध का भी खयाल रखना पड़ा। मैथिल अपनी संस्कृत छोड़ना नहीं चाहते थे, साथ ही उन्हें अपनी मातृभाषा का भी ध्यान था, अतः सभी रचनाएँ उभयपक्षीय हुई। उस समय मिथिला की देवियों तथा साधारण दर्शकों में भी इतनी पटुता थी कि वे सरल संस्कृत-प्राकृत का आनन्द उठा सकें, इसलिये नाटकों की भाषा को, कवित्व के आडम्बरों से बचाकर सरल रखना पड़ा एवं कथा भाग भी उलझना तथा विस्तार की सीमा से दूर रहा। कवि को इस बात का ध्यान रखना, आवश्यक होता था कि वह जो कुछ लिख रहा है सो...सर्वसाधारण के बोध की वस्तु रहे; स्वल्प साधनों से थोड़े समय में सफलतापूर्वक अभिनीत किया जा सके। आनन्दपूर्वक सब तरह के रुचिवालों के लिए सन्तोषदायक साथ ही कवित्व से खाली भी नहो।'

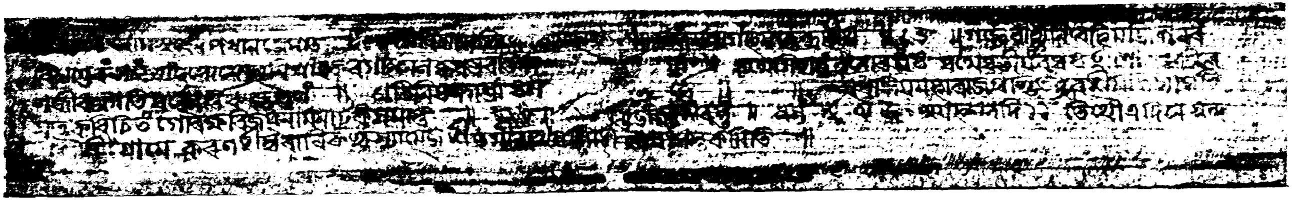
—Introduction to his edn. of Ramadāsa's—*Ânandavijaya.*

6. Ṛddhinātha Jha in a letter to me thus describes how a Garuḍa or Airāvata used to be shown; "बतबा डा. पाएर क लम्बाइ रहै छलैक ततबे टा बनलतत्तहृस्ख होइ छल ओ पृष्ठ भाग मे दू टा सवार क पाएर पैसबा योग्य भूर कएल रहै छलैक भूर मे पाएर पैसबा

THE MS OF VIDYAPATI'S *GORAKSHAVIJAYA-NATAKA* COPIED IN LA. SAM 495 (1614 A.D.)



The First Page



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Courtsey H H the Maharaja of Nepal

the orders of Mahārāja Śivasiṁha (c. 1412-1428/9.) Its speeches are in Sanskrit and the songs are in Maithili.

Śivanandana Thākura notices another drama by Vidyāpati, called *Manimanjarinatika*[11]. But it seems that it has no vernacular passages in it.

Grierson attributed[12] *Pārijātaharana* and *Rukminiharana* also to him, but no evidence of their existence is known to us.

2. *Govinda*

Govinda, the author of *Nalacaritanata(ka)*,[13] is different from Govinda (Thākura), the court-poet of Kaṁsanārāyaṇa (c. 1527) and Govindadāsa, Jha, the great poet who was contemporary of Sundara Thākura. For, he gives his genealogy differently[14]. He had three brothers Mahādeva, Vāsudeva and Gopāla. He was the son of Kavi Ravikara, grandson of Śrīkara, great-grandson of Lakṣmaṇadatta, great-great-grandson of Sthitidatta and great-great-great-grandson of Jivadatta. This geneo-

12 LSI V, ii, p. 17 ; following him various *e.g.* Kieth (Sanskrit Drama) and Mishrabandhu Vinoda also say this.

13 The MS was noticed by Bihar Research Society in the library of Ānanda Jha, P O. Pindarucha, Dist, Darbhanga. I found a copy of its vernacular portions in the library of Raghunandana dāsa, Village, Sakhwara, P. O. Manigachi, Darbhanga. Canda Jha noticed the MS first in the appendix to his *Râmâyaṇa*

14. Cf.... ब शरीर जीवदत्तः सुतं अजनयदेस (ष !) लेष (ब !) तुल्यं विमल- मतिं स्थितिदत्तमत्युदारं, स च सकलगुणास्पदं जनाना अलभत् लक्ष्मणदत्तमिष्ट तनयवर उदित्वरस्य भानोः सहशरुचिः सुकृतेन जबे श्रीकरोऽभवदमुष्य नन्दते नन्दनोदित इवामरद्रुमः । राजहंस-कमनीयमूर्तिभिः पूरयन् दशदिशोपकीर्त्तिभिः । हरिहरचरणपरायणः प्रिय-श्रीसुन्दर विन्दनीविनोद भानुः रविकर कविरेतदात्मजोऽभूद्यमभिदधुर्यः अपत्य गोविन्दं विन्दतपि सुत जघानो गुरु सिन्धु सुतं वस्यानुजा माधववासुदेव गोपाल नामान उपात्तविद्याः ।

—(Beginning of Ms.)

logy is corroborated in the Pañji[15]. We learn from it that he was also known as Kavi Horayi. His great-grandfather Lakṣmaṇadatta was married to the daughter of Mahārāja Gaṇeśvarasiṁha (c. 1370/1) (the father of Mahārāja Kīrttisiṁha, patron of Vidyāpati in his early days). He belonged to the family of Dīrghaghoṣa-Sandahapura and must have been a close successor of Vidyapati Thākura.

It is possible that this Govinda is the same as Mahāmahopādhyaya Govinda the author of a Tantra work[16] called *Govindatattvanirnaya*, dated La. Sam. 52 ? (=1639 ? A. D.)

The Bhanitās[17] of his songs reveal that his patron was one Yādava Rāya, husband of

15. I am indebted for this information to R. Jha, Librarian, Raj Library, Darbhanga. मूल दीघो (दीर्घघोष) मूल ग्राम सन्दहपुर

16. *Nepal Cat.* p. 17.

17. The Bhanitās are ;

Song No. 2 : (echoes Vidyapati)

मन गोविन्द बन मन रह कठिन संग विछोह ।

लछमीपति बुझ नरायन 'मुनिहुँ मानस मोह' ॥

(Cf. Song No. 1 (मुनिहुक मानस दरसए लोभ)

Song No. 3 : मन गोविन्द मति । बुझ रुकुमिनि पति ॥

(Cf. Ratipati Bhagat Part III ch. IV).

Song No. 4 : थिर गोविन्द मन मानस लाए । बुझु रुकुमिनि पति जादव राए ॥

(Cf. Ratipati Part III ch. IV).

Song No. 5 : गोविन्द कवि मन सूझ मधुसूदन सकल कहओ अवधारी ।

Song No. 6 : गोविन्दकवि बुझ मधुसूदन आरति समय न सहे॥

Song No. 9 : भन गोविन्द यदुनन्दन चाह ॥

Song No. 10 : भन गोविन्द यदुनन्दन सेवक तें पए अपरूब परकार हे ॥

Rukuminīdevi. It is not clear if he refers to a patron or to Lord Nārāyaṇa in other places. In any case, these patrons are not known to us in contemporary history as yet. They may have been some minor ruling chiefs who followed the dissolution of the Oinivāra Dynasty.

The plot of the drama is based on the familiar story of Nala's exile. The dialogue is in Sanskrit and Prākṛta but songs are wholly in Maithili. The dramatic use of songs seems to have begun as early as this play. For example, the entrance of the Minister is announced in a song :

मेल सुचरित मन्त्रिवर परवेस ।
अनुखन जसु मन धरम उदेश ॥ Etc.

There are poignant moments in the play—such as, when Damayantī, forsaken by Nala, cries out in distress :

अपद सकल संपद पहु हारल न मानल कोनहुँ निषेधे ।
परिहरि परिजन गमन कएल वन दारुण देव विरोधे ॥ ध्रु० ॥ ...
यदि न मिलब पहु दहन पैसब मोहुँ पिआ विनु कैसनि नारी ।
'गोविन्द' कवि भन बुझ मधुसूदन सकल कहओ अवधारी ॥

The king repents his fault of gambling in an excellent song :

हमे जुआरी हमे जुआरी—
जगत विदित हमे जुआरी रे ।
हमरि कोरी हमर पास—
धनिक देखि न आब निरास ।
जत अरजथि जीवक सेवँ—
तत गमावथि एक निमेषँ ।

Song No. 11 and 12 :* भन गोविन्द यदुनन्दनदास । कमला पति परिपूरथु आस (कमलापति may refer to the Lord).

Songs No. 1, 7 and 8 : भन गोविन्द

ठकक बेटी हमर सारि—
दुअओ धनिक मोरथ(स) दुआरि ।
गोविन्द भन नरपति देखि—
फारए लागल कोठा सेखि ।

The end of the play witnesses the return of the king and the queen to their home :

आएल नैषध बसुधानाथ, चान्द वदन दमयन्ती साथ ॥
न क (?) वलय माल कुण्डलहार, जनि भुवने सुरपति अवतार ॥
नागरि जन मन मदन समान, जा सभ मेल न होएत आन ॥
पुरि परिजन जनपद जुवराज, भैएत किकर तन राज ॥
धरम रूप धरि धरिणी पाए, नैशध नाम धराओल आए ॥
जसुदरशन जननत आनन्द, कुमुद बिपिन जनु पुनिमक चन्द ॥
भन 'गोबिन्द' यदुनन्दनदास, कमलापति परिपूरथु आस ॥

3. *Rámadása Jha*

We know Rāmadāsa Jha the author of *Anandavijaynatika*[18] very well. He belonged to the Kujaulıbāra Makharaunī family of Brāhmanas and was the fourth and the youngest brother of the famous successor of Vidyāpati, Govindadāsa Jha (contemporary of Mahārājā Sundara Thākura 1644-71.[19])

The story of the play is simple and is divided into four Acts. In the first Act, Mādhava, the hero, is shown to become eager

18. Two widely differing editions are available in print. Pt, Maheśa Jha's edition from Raj Press, Darbhanga and Bhuvaneśvara Singh Bhuvana's edition from Vaiśālı Press Kamalālaya, Muzaffarpur. The latter is edited with an introduction and a commentary. MSS of this work are also available with (1) Babu Baldeva Jha, Village Raiyam, P. O. Lohat, Dist. Darbhanga, and (2) Ānanda Jha, P. O. Piṇḍāruoha, Dist Darbhanga.

19. See more information about his family under Govindadās Jha (Part II, chapter VI above) who is described at length in the present work of Rāmadāsa *alias* Sarasa Rāma.

for his beloved[20]. He learns of Rādhā's beauty from his friend Ānandakanda in the following words :

आज मधुपुर आइतँ पथ भेटलि राधा ।
मानस मीन तरङ्गिनि बिहर अगाधा ॥
कुन्तल शैवल लोचन अति मधुमद भोरा ।
आनन कमल अधर दल कुच चकेवा जोरा ॥
बाहु मृनाल नाभि ह्रद सुजघन अवतारे ।
किङ्किनि कलरव कैतवैं जलचर परचारे ॥
शोभय चारु उरु कुलैं करि कर अभिरामे ।
मिलति मुरारि पयोनिधि मन रसमय 'रामे' ॥
कमलापति पति गुनमत सुरतरु अवतारे ।
रस बुझ सुन्दर नरपति सब नागर सारे ॥[21]

This is an imitation of Vidyāpati's famous Baṭagamanī describing the youthful heroine on her way[22].

Mādhava then requests his friend to help him to see her. In the second Act, Rādhā along with her friends Vicakṣaṇa and Vācāla meets Ānandakanda. Ānandakanda deceives them by posing to be an astrologer called Guṇanidhāna and asks them to collect flowers for the worship of Lord Śiva. While the girls are engaged in collecting flowers in the garden, Mādhava and Ānandakanda make their appearance, through a device tamely remniscent of the bee-episode in Kālidāsa's *Śākuntalam*. But before they could talk long with the girls, Mādhava is called away. This Act shows the birth of love in Rādhā's heart[23].

20. Hence it is called "*Sotkaṇṭha Mādhavanāma Prathamoṅkah*".

21. P. 10, Raj Press edition.

22. Khagendranatha Mitra's *Vidyāpti*.

23. Hence it is called '*Sotkaṇṭha Rādhānama Dvitiyoṅkah*'

Then follows an account of Rādhā worshipping the Lord with the flowers collected in the last Act. The Lord is supposed to respond to her prayer. Rādhā is shown next in love-lorn state :

माधव विरहें वियोगिनि भेल, देल वृषभानु दुलहि परवेश ॥
मानस आकुल विकल शरीर, मुख रुचि मलिन नयन ढरनीर ॥
धीर चेत नहिं दीघ निशास, आधि अधीनि आलिङ्गन पास ॥
विनु पुछलहुँ देअ उत्तर शयानि, पुछलहुँ न कहए समुचित बानि ॥
भनए "राम" रस बुझ अनुरूप, कमलावति पति सुन्दर भूप ॥[24]

There are several-songs of separation sung by Rādhā while she pines for Mādhava :

कि कहब, ओ रे, ताहरि कहिनि पुछिअ जनु तअ बिनु ।
बासि कुसुम सनि भर तनु ।
चानन, ओ रे, चउगुन चेडकि चउँकि रह धनि कह ।
कौने देह देल हुतवह ॥
विरचल, ओ रे, शीतल शयन नलिनि दए घन कए ।
परसहिं करए भसम मए ।
तुअ गुन, ओ रे, गनइतें बुरुझि महीतल ।
अविरल भासलि फिरब, नयन जल ॥
रसमय, ओ रे, भनए 'राम' विरहिनि गति पद्ममति ।
रस बुझ सुन्दर नरपति ।[25]

At the end a Kāpālika consoles Rādhā and asks her to wait upon her beloved in Vṛndāvana.

The last Act describes similar condition of the hero. His appearance is described in pathetic lines :

एकसर सुजन कलपतरु लाख । सम बुझि हमे भेल तुअ अभिलाख ॥
तसु परिनति तति कि कहब आज । अपन गमरपन कहितहुँ लाज ॥
तुअ गुन रतन महघ मनु रङ्क । अनुभव प्रेम पयोनिधि पङ्क ॥
निशा रिपु अमुख अनुगत जानि । ताहि रहए देह पिक-सं बानि ॥

24. P. 38, Raj Press edition.
25. P. 44, Raj Press edition.

रूपे लिखलि रहि तोहि दूमें ओर । तें पचशर सर हनहिं अंगोर ॥
देखि कुसल कुसु जोवन लागि । तैं वर कमल कलेवर आगि ॥
'धरराम' भन सुनि मरिकान । हँसि शशि मुखि परिरम्भन कान्हु ॥
कमलापतिपति गुनकनिधान । कुम्भ सन्दर नृप महि पंचबान ॥'[26]

Through the help of her friends Rādhā approaches Mādhava, and ultimately they are united.

There is no remarkable skill of plot-construction or psycholgical insight displayed in this play. The story is loose and covers a simple and slender theme. It is only an excuse to bring in love songs. Unhappily a majority of the songs also bear a poor imitative stamp of Vidyāpati.

There are two versions of the text available to us; the Rāj Press Edition and the Vaiśāli Press Edition. The former appears to be the original text, but the latter represents the 'stage copy', perhaps the exact amount of the text which was actually used by some of the Kīrtaniyā actors.

4. *Devānanda*

Devānanda was of the Sakarāḍhi family[27] and lived at Parahatapura in South Mithila. His father, Raghunātha, was the youngest of his brothers (others being Bhavadeva and Yadunātha) and his mother was ..unavatidevi. Raghunātha appears to have been himself a poet —he was called a 'Kavindra'. Both Mahārāja Mahīnātha Thākura (1671-1693) and Mahārāja Narapati Thākura (1693-1703/4) married in his family. Therefore, we can fix his date with certainty. He was contemporary of Locana and flourished in the latter half of the 17th century and the early 18th century.

26. P. 45-46, Raj Press edition.

27. See below f.n, No. 38.

The Ms. of his only play, *Usāharaṇa*,[28] is very mutilated. Its first three pages and some pages in the end are missing. The extant portions reveal the first use of the device used so frequently by Kīrtaniyā dramatists in early stages—the Sanskrit verses being translated immediately into vernacular as they occur in the text.

The story of *Usāharaṇa* is well-known and has been used by many Dramtists. Some of the songs in Devānanda's version are extremely moving. For example, when Uṣā sings in the VI Act on Aniruddha's being entangled in the Trap of Snakes :

राजविजय राग

अनेक यतन सञ्जु पाओल रे ० बन्हि पुरल अभिमान ।
से पहु विधि दोषे ँ दुरि रहल रे ० पाँतर परल परान ।
विफल मोर बडपन रे ॥ ध्रु० ॥
मलय पवन तनु तापए रे ० हिमकर निछुव अङ्गार ।
कुवलि परिश्र कुसुम पारसिकर रे ० विषधर सन मेलहार ।

28. MS of this drama is noticed by the Bihar Research Society, Patna to be available at the place of the late Munshi Raghunandanadasa, Village, Sakhwar, P. O. Manigachi, Dist. Darbhanga. Extracts from it in Devanagari characters were made available to me by his son, Narendranathadasa. Beginning of the MS :

विजयं सदा । असुरास्सन्दते प्राप्ता नूनं चवभवन्तिते । पुनराकाशे करवं दत्वा लिखनार्थमवधेहि । नटी-आज्ञ किं उषा तं च आयो । सूत्र-अग्ने शृणु लिखनार्थं पत्रिकायेता आयासेन समुद्रमप्यवचिता कष्टाति कष्टेनवा सस्तु दखिती परैव पितवा दृष्ट्वा कुतो लज्जिता । तस्यां वसम सौध मध्य वसति प्याप्यास्थिरास्ते कृतां यादव वेष्टितस्व हरवां तस्य विया हाकथं ।

End of the MS :

या नाना गुण पूरिता बहु रता

प्रस्तार सर्वस्वरागीत ग्राम विशोभिता—पुलकमूर्त्तं प्रास वहिर्भुतिः । ताल प्राश्रित मुच्छना सरभस तानानुरागस्थलीपुस्ती वा रसिकापि वा ननु क्रमाकृतिविचापि,

(Incomplete).

चानन बिन्दु तन श्यामल जनि रे • तेजल सकल सिंगार ।
प्रलयकरत्न सखि सबे कामिनि रे • भनवि अधम मोहि मार ।
तओं जिब हम पथ राखब रे • जओ देखबतन्हि आए ।
आनन्द देवानन्द कवि गाबए रे • विरह सङ्गति पथ जाए ॥

Then Aniruddha smiling replies and prays to Durga:

नाग पाशबन्धन मोचार्थं श्रीअनिरुद्धक उक्ति
श्रीभगवती-स्तुति

जय जय दुर्गे जगत जननी • दुर कए भवभए होइ दहिनी ।
खने नीला खने सित निरमान • खन कुङ्कुम पङ्क तनु अनुमान ।
राका बिधुमुख नवविधु भरल • तत नयन सोम केश कराल ।
लोहित रदन लोहित कर पान • भ्रकुटि कुटिल पुनु मोन धेआन ।
श्रुति भुजे बहु भुजे हर दुख मोर • ऋषिहि पुरान गनल भुव तोर ।
करें वर अभय खड्ग जपमाल • मुकुर शूलधनु डमरुक विशाल ।
न जानिअ आगमे तुअ कत रूप • तेतिस कोटि देव तोहि निरूप ।
पुनि पुनि हहहो देवि गोचर लेह • नाग पासबन्धन मोच्छ देह ।
आनन्दे देवानन्द नति गाव • हरि चदि रिपु हनि पुरह भाव ।

The picture of the happy couple Aniruddha and Uṣā reminds us of Miranda and Ferdinand in Shakespeare's *Tempest*. It is extremely happy and charming image:

ए बनि ए बनि सुनह सरूप ।
कहि न होअ वर कनेया रूप ॥
त्रिभुवन दुहु नव अभिराम ।
देखहु न पारिअ हुनक उपाम ॥
रभसे वेकत कय नीअ नीअ हाव ।
दुअउ करे रतिरंग सुभाव ॥
आनन्द देवानन्द भनभाव ।
दुहुकाँ सकल मेल परयाव ॥

5. *Umápati Upádhyáya*

The greatest of Medieval Kirtaniyā dramatists, Umapati Upādhyāya, seems to have written his play for the entertainment and pleasure of a non-Maithila court.

He has been placed in two widely different periods. It is therefore important to note the exact times in which he flourished. Before we examine his date, it is necessary to find out if we have a correct identity of Umāpati in literature[29] Aufrecht mentions fourteen Umāpatis[30]. A careful analysis of them reveals that the only author who can be identified with Umāpati Upādhyaya, the author of the Maithili drama *Pārijātaharaṇa* is Umāpati Upādhyaya, son of Ratnapati Upādhyāya and Ratnāvatī, the author of *Padārthīyadivyacakṣu*. Other sources[31] indicate that Umāpati the author of *Śuddhinirṇaya* as also Umāpati the author of *Sārasangraha* and *Smṛtidīpikā* were probably Maithilas—for all of them bore the surname Upādhyāya, all these works are in Maithilī script, are found in Maithila only,[32] and

29. *Catalogus Catalogorum*, I, p. 70.

30. Other Umāpatis are: Umāpati Dalapati under whom flourished Maithila Keśava Bhaṭṭa, author of *Campukāvya* (MMC II pt. iii p.61) Umāpati, father of Candracaṇḍa; Umāpati, father of Premanidhi; Umāpati, father of Tapana, father of Narasimhasena, father of Viśvanāthasena who flourished under Mahārāja Gajapati of Orissa; Umāpati of the Karuṇakalpalatābhakti MSS in Nāgara characters in Oudh; Umāpati Tripathin of Oudh?; Umāpati (? author of *Pratiṣṭhāviveka* and *Suddhinirṇaya?*); Umāpati, author of *Ratnamalaṭīkā* an Oudh MS; Umāpati of *Haṭhapradīpikāṭippaṇa*; Umāpati Dutta, grammarian; contemporary of Jumaranandin quoted by Gopicandra; Umāpatidhara (or simply Umāpati poet?) the famous author quoted in *Gītagovinda*; and Umāpati of the nineteenth century MS of *Vṛttivārttika* in Oudh.

31. MMC I and II; Mitra, *Notices of Sanskrit MSS*; Kane, Vol. I, p. 683: ('Earlier than 1575 A. D.?, author of *Pratiṣṭhāviveka*, *Suddhinirṇaya*, *Śrāddhanirṇaya*'); "Umāpati, author of *Smṛtadīpikā*, B. O. MSS Cat. I, 576, No. 441."

32. Except *Suddhinirṇaya* which is a widely known work and is found in Oudh also. It is not possible to determine the identity of Umāpati Śāstrī Mahāmahopādhyāya author of *Vṛhat-tithi-nirṇaya* (a work of doubtful

are traditionally known to be Maithila works. It is possible that all these Umāpatis are the same as Umāpati the Maithili dramatist. For, tradition says that the poet Umāpati was also the leading Dharma-śāstrī of his time. This identification is further supported by the title which is invariably given to the poet—'Mahāmahopādhyāya Kavi-paṇḍita-mukhya.' In spite of all this, it appears that there were at least two Maithila Umāpatis[33]—one belonging probably to Maṅgarauni and the other to Koilakha.

He gives the name of his patron as "Hariharadeva"[34] Hindupati, the victor of Yavanas, in his play the *Pārijātaharana*. Grierson identified[35] Hariharadeva Hindupati with the great Maithila king, Harisiṁhadeva (c. 1324) of Karṇāṭa Dynasty. Mr. B K. Chatterji[36] in his essay on Vidpāpati, supports this and adds that the king is rightly described as 'Hindūpati'

authenticity owing to the peculiar nature of its contents as regards the Maithila Brāhmaṇas) quoted by Paṇḍita-pañcānana Sri Lūṭana Jha of Koilakh the village where our Umapati Upādhyāya is supposed to have lived (vide MODA, 27th year, Udgāra 4, Māgha).

33. One of them (probably our poet) balonged to Pagauli family of Maithila Brāhmaṇas. See MMC I, p 425.

महोपाध्याय पगौली सं श्रीमदुमापतिविरचितः शुद्धनिर्णयः सम्पूर्णः । लिखितमिदं भावयाकृष्णसतम्यांबुधशाके १७४८ ।

34. Cf आविष्टोऽस्मि यवनच्छेदनकरालकरवालेन विच्छेदयत चतुर्वेद-पथ-प्रकाशक-प्रतापेन भगवतः श्रीविष्णोर्दशमावतारेण हिन्दुपति श्रीहरिहरदेवेन यथा उमापत्युपाध्यायविरचितं नवपारिजातमंगलमभिनयो वीररसावेशं समग्रन्तु भवन्तो भूपाल मण्डलस्य ॥

Note the absence of any such epithet as "Maithileśa" etc. for his patron.

35. Published by the Bihar Research Society, Patna; JBORS, III, pt. i, pp. 20-90.

36. *Joural of Dept. of Letters* Calcutta University 1927, p. 44.

because we know that Harisiṁhadeva reorganized Hindu society and was victorious over the Muslims. While some scholars have confirmed this identification by finding a reference to Harisiṁhadeva in 'a play' upon the words 'Hara' and 'Hari' in Umāpati's *Párijátaharana*[37] on the analogy of a similar pun in a famous passage of Vidyāpati's *Puruṣa-Parikṣá* Dr. Umesha Mishra has found linguistic and literary arguments to place Umāpati prior to Vidyāpati[38]. Dr. Mishra finds similarities in expressions and ideas between Umāpati and Vidyāpati and indicates some archaic features in Umāpati's language. But all this can be easily explained. Similarities may only show that Vidyāpati was a favourite poet of Umāpati and that consciously or unconsciously Umāpati echoed or even improved upon the lines of his predecessor. The archaic flavour of the language of the *Párijáta-Harana* is in itself a very indecisive argument, for it may have been consciously attempted by the poet.

On the other hand Cetanātha Jha upheld a native tradition which says that Umāpati was an older contemporary and teacher of MM. Gokulanātha Upādhyāya (c. 1685-1716) who flourished in the reign of Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha (1704-1740). According to this tradition Umāpati was a court Paṇḍita of Hariharadeva Hindupati, a chieftain of a place called Makamani in the Parganna of Saptari in Nepal (near Bhapatiāhī O. T. R. Station) It was,

37. See JAYANTI p. 404. The passage from *Puruṣa-parīkṣâ* is :

हरो वा हरसिंहो वा गीतविद्याविदौ स्थितौ ॥

हरसिंहे गत स्वर्गं गीतवित् केवलं हरः ॥ Belvedere Press Edi. p. 59 and from *Pârijâtaharaṇa* (Cetanatha Jha's edition p. 1?)

38. *Hindustânî*, April 1935, V, ii, p. 117.

therefore, concluded that Umapati lived during the reigns of Mahārāja Narapati Thākura (1692/3-1703/4) and Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha[39]. An old poem by this chieftain has been quoted in *Mithilánka*[40], evidently in confirmation of the above tradition. Pt Ramanātha Jha also lends his support to this view and points out that there are two benedictory verses in the drama, one for Hariharadeva Hindupati and the other for the king or Mithila.[41]

Grierson dismissess the second view as erroneous[42]. His main arguments are :

> "How could a poet of Mithila have called this petty prince-ling a 'lord paramount of other kings' and 'king of Mithila'? Narapati or Raghava would better deserve this title, and the verse in connection with Gokulanatha proves that Umapati was definitely knowing of the Raja of Darbhanga, in fact was going to attend a grand gathering of Pandits there when floods checked him."

> "Again, how could he have been a conqueror of Musalman. If at any time there had been an opposition of the Musalmans it would have been Narapati and Raghavasimha not a local chief of Nepal. Yet of Raghavasimha we know that he accepted a *Mukairarıpatta* of the Tirhut Sarkar, at a rent of one lakh rupees yearly from Alah Vardi Khan who was then Faujdar of Rajmahal."

Grierson seems too onfuse the different strains in which Umāpati refers to 'the King of Mithila' and to 'Hariharadeva, lord para-

39. Introduction to *Pārijātaharaṇa* edited by Cetanatha Jha.

40. MITHILÂNKA, p. 73 "Mithileśa Lokanikera Kavita". This poem is, however, of Vidyāpati given in Benipuri's edition with Hindūpati in the Bhanitā, poem 77 ; and with small variations in MGS pt. IV No. 8.

41. *Maithili-Padya-Sangraha*, Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad, Darbhanga, p. 18.

42. The date of Umapati" in JBORS III, pt. iv, Dec, 1917.

mount of other kings'. Further, it is forgotten that Harisiṁhadeva might have been victorious over Muslim invaders according to one version, but there is evidence to prove that he had to leave Mithila for Nepal, being defeated by the Musalmans. Nevertheless, there is some force in Grierson's argument that a petty chieftain of Mekamānī could not possibly be meant by the epithets ascribed to Hariharadeva Hindūpati by Umāpati. Mereover, we know that the contemporary chief of Mekamānī was called Bhupasiṁha[43] and not Hindupati.

The solution is found when we find a king called Hindupati, patron of poets and scholars (including Maithila poets)[44], who could be very rightly be described by the epithets—

"यवनच्छेदनकरालकरवालेन विच्छेदगतः चतुर्वेदपथप्रकाशकप्रतापेन भगवतः श्री विष्णोर्दशमावतारेण"

It is Hindūpati,[45] king of Garhas Maṇḍalā. (Bundelakhanda), in Central India, who was a very near contemporary of Narapati Thākura and Rāghavasimha. Hindupati was grandson of Hridayashah, the famous son of Chhatrasāla. Maithila scholars and poets have been known to frequent the courts of Bundelakhanda for a number of years in the Medieval times. The title 'Guru' attached to Umāpati's name in the Bhanitās of the songs in *Párijátaharana* become's significant, as he must have been the Rajaguru of Hindupati. Besides, we have a Ms. copied by one Umāpati for Hemāngada in La. Sam. 577 (=1696 A. D.)[46] which is important in as much as it makes it possible for Umāpati to have gone to Bundelakhanda

43. BAKHŚI p. 172.
44. MMC II pp. 19-20.
45. *Imperial Gazetteer*, XIX, p. 401.
46. MMC I p. 502.

along with Maheśa Thākura, Hemāṅgada Thākura and others. This identification of the patron of Umāpati is likely to explain the absence of any quotation of Umāpati's poems in *Locana's Rāgataraṅginī* either because Umāpati flourished later than Locana or because he wrote his drama in his early days in a foreign land.

To sum up, Umāpati was an older contemporary of MM. Gokulanātha Upādhyāya, lived during the reigns of Mahāraja Narapati Thakura and Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha[47] and wrote his drama under the patronage of Bundelakhaṇḍa-chief Hindupati.

The *Pārijātaharana*[48] is the only authentic drama of this poet. The subject of the play is mainly based on Chapters 124-135 of *Harivamsa*, though *Visnu-Purāna* (chapter 5 verses 30, 31) and *Śrimadbhāgavata* (chapter 10 verse

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47. It should be remembered that the poet is 'Ativṛddha' (very old) at the time of Mahārāja Rāghava Siṁha. Cf. the verse quoted by Centanatha Jha.

48. There are three printed editions and several MSS of this work available ; (i) Published by Maithila Publishing Company, Darbhanga under Vindhyanatha Jha and edited by Canda Jha, 1893, (out of print). (ii) Published in JBORS III, Patna (edited and translated into English by Sir George Grierson), (iii) Published by Cetanatha Jha, Darbhanga, 1917. Quotations in the text are from this last edition. The play is the most popular of Kirtaniyā dramas. The MSS at other places are : (a) Dharnidhara Pathaka Village, Baligarha, P O. Runni Sayeedpur, Muzaffarpur. (b) Satyadeva Mishra, Village, Rahika, P. O Rahika, Distt Darbhanga. (c) F 'deva Jha, Village, Raiyama, P. O. Lohata, Dist Darbhanga. (d) Jayaramana Jha, village Ujāna, P. O. Jhanjharapur, Dist. Darbhanga. (e) Adyanatha Mishra, village, Pahitol, P. O. Manigachi Dist. Darbhanga. (f) MM Rajnatha Mishra, Village, Saurathа, P. O. Madhubani, Dist. Darbhanga. (g) Several old and new MSS (some very important, pointing out various differences in the actual acting of the text) with Narendranathadasa, Sakhwar, P. O. Manigachi, Dist. Darbhanga.

59) are also used. The only change that the poet makes in the story from *Harivamsa*, is that Kṛṣṇa takes Arjuna, instead of Pradyumna, to fight with Indra.

The story runs as follows: Nārada presented a Pārijāta flower to Kṛṣṇa, which he passed on to Rukmiṇī, the senior queen and mother of the heir-apparent Pradyumna. Satyabhāmā, his other queen, was angry at this, and was not pleased till Kṛṣṇa promised to bring her not merely one flower, but the entire Pārijāta tree from Indra's garden. Kṛṣṇa at first, sent for it, but his request was refused. Thereupon he attacked Indra and carried off the tree, and presented it to Satyabhāmā who planted it in her courtyard. Nārada now appeared and told her that if one's dearest thing was given away under its shadow, one got undying fruits. Satyabhāmā, therefore, gave him Kṛṣṇa as her dearest possession and Subhadrā gave him her husband, Arjuna. Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna thus become Nārada's slaves and he puts them up for sale. Satyabhāmā and Subhadrā purchase back their husbands for a cow each, and the play ends with general hilarity.

It is one of the best Maithilī plays of the "Regular" type. It is remarkable for its literary merits and provides a very good entertainment. The plot is well-constructed: events follow one another in a necessary connection. The characterization is of a developed kind; it is intimately linked with the plot of the play. The contrast between Satyabhāmā and Rukmiṇī is successfully brought out; we know for certain that one is Kṛṣṇa's favourite, though by right the other deserves Kṛṣṇa's greater attention. Arjuna has an important part to play. But it is Nārada who is the guiding star of the play. It is he who initiates the action, and it is he who ends it in the most pleasant manner possible. His presence, however, brings in

quarrel according to his traditional attribute to induce people to quarrel—the fight between Indra and Kṛṣṇa or the jealousy between Satyabhāmā and Rukmiṇī takes place due to the intervention of Nārada. The descriptions stir our imagination and would not make the audience feel the lack of scenery.

Here is a decided lead given in plot-construction and characterization. It is an advance on the rather slender plots in Nepal and even Mithila dramas of this period. The subject of the play continues to be connected with Kṛṣṇa, but it is not the hackneyed love story of Kṛṣṇa and his Gopīs. There is more sustained interest and far more compactness here than in any of those dramas.

Humour predominates the play. It is evident in the central situation as well as in minor places. For example, in the first Act Nārada's quarrelsome character and the timid nature of Sumukhī are revealed in a funny dialogue.

The songs in the play are wholly in Maithili, but Sanskrit verses and Prākṛta prose passages are also given. Sanskrit verses are translated and elaborated upon in the vernacular songs. The sentiment predominating the play is Vīra (heroic), fit for the court of the brave Bundela chief, and the very first benedictory stanza indicates it—it is a prayer to Śakti in a diction appropriate to the heroic sentiment:

जय मधुकैटभमर्द्दिनि, जय महिषासुरमर्द्दिनि ॥
धूमरनयन भसमविधिनि, चण्डमुण्ड दुहु शिरखण्डिनि ॥
रक्तविजासुर संहारिणि, शुम्भनिशुम्भहृदयदारिणि ॥
सब सुरशक्ति रूपधारिणि, सेवक सबहुक उपकारिणि ॥
अनुपम रूप सिंह वाहिनि, सबहु समय रहिहह दाहिनि ॥
सुमति उमापति आशिषवानी, सकलसभा जय करथु भवानी ॥

The similes are beautifully used, even novel in a sense, and the marshalling of ideas

is marvellous. For example, the celebration of Śiva's wedding in the second song is in extraordinarily polished and mellifluous style. But for the most part, however, he merely repeats and echoes Vidyāpati [49]:

Some specimen songs are quoted below :

(१) जय शम्भु नटा जय शम्भु नटा, हँसि हर हेरथि गौरि निकटा ॥ध्रु०॥
झर्झरी मडुर मृदङ्ग बजावथि नन्दी निपुण झालि झमटा ॥
ताल समीर लए गुन गावथि, सङ्गहि नारद मुनि बिपटा ॥
चान कलाएँ चुइल अमिय रस तेहि सीउल अजिन लपटा ॥
गौरि सिंह देखि दुरहि पड़ाइलि, लाज कओन सहजहि लपटा ॥
भमइत भानु जटा लए झाँपल, चमकि उठए जनि जलद घटा ॥
गङ्ग तरङ्ग भूमि भीजल अति, नयन चमक जनि बिजुलि छटा ॥
हँसथि सखी सभ दए करताली, ताल धरथि जनि सहस्र घटा ॥
सानन भए बर दिअओ दिगम्बर, सुमति उमापति मिनति गोटा ॥

This is one of the finest Nacaris in Maithili Literature. The "टा" repeated at the end of every foot produces a strange sound-picture of Śiva the Naṭarāja.

(२) हेरि सओ प्रेम आस हम लाओल पाओल परिभव ठामे ।
जलधर छाहरि तर हम सुतलहुँ आतप मेल परिनामे ॥
सखि हे मन जनु करिअ मलाने ।
अपन करम फल हम उपभोगब तोहें किअ तेजह पराने ॥ ध्रु० ॥
पुरुब पिरिति रिति हुनि जँ बिसरब तइओ ने हुनकर दोसे ।
कतेक जतन धरि जँ परिपालिअ साप ने मानब पोसे ॥
कबहु नेह पुनि नहि परगासब केवल फल अपमाने ।
बेरि सहस्र दस अमिअ भिजाबिय कोमल न होअ परवाने ॥
भन गुरु उमापति हरि होएब परसन मान होएत अवसाने ।
सकल नृपति पति हिंदूपति जिउ महरानि बिरमाने ॥ २ ॥

This is one of those songs to sing which great skill was needed by the Kirtaniyā-actor

49. See Dr. Mishra's article in *Hindustānī* 1935. pp. 120.

and for which the glory of Umāpati in the history of Maithilī drama must ever rest.

Umāpati's play gained wide popularity. Indeed, it made Kirtaniyā drama the fashion of the day. So much so that the nomenclature and grouping of the stock-actors in a Kirtaniya play seem to have originated on the basis of the characters in this play.

6. *Ramápati Upádhyáya*

Along with Umāpati, Ramapati succeeded in giving a final form to the 'Regular' Maithilī Kīrtaniyā drama. He is known to us much more fully than Umāpati. For, he gives his father's name and his Gotra in his play *Rukminiharana*. It is thus possible to locate him in the Pañji. He belonged to the family of Palivāra-Mahisī of Vatsagotra. His father was Kavi Kṛṣṇapati Jha. His mother was descended from the famous Maithili scholar Ayāci Miśra of Sidarpura Sarisava family. He was married to the daughter of Thākurasimha, son of Mahārāja Narapati Thākura[50]

He wrote his drama *Rukminiparinaya*[51] (also called *Rukminiharana* or *Rukminisvayamvara*) under the patronage of Mahārāja Narendrasimha (1744-1761). It was presented first to the assembly of Paṇḍits gathered on the occasion of Mahārāja Narendrasimha's Bathing cere-

50. Narendranathadasa's introduction to it; see below f n. 1.

51. Two MSS of this work (one from Haṭi and the other from Ālāpur) have been collected and a press copy of the work, along with elaborate notes and introduction, have been prepared by Narendranathadasa. I have used this copy in the text. Badrinatha Jha Kaviśekhara and Ramanatha Jha have published some extracts from the play in MITHILĀNKA and *Maithilīpadyasangraha*, Maithili Sāhitya Pariṣad, Darbhanga p 28 ff, respectively from some other MSS(?).

mony in the sacred river, Kamalā. The story is based on *Harivamsa* (parvas 47 60) and *Śrimadbhágavata* (Skandha X Chapters 52-54). The author follows mainly the account of *Harivamsa*.

The play is divided into six Acts. In the Nandi the poet builds up a beautiful picture of Śiva as the Lord of Nṛtya (Acting):

नटराज हरा नटराज हरा, डमरू पिनाक त्रिशूल धरा ॥ ध्रुवम् ॥
बिमल कपाल मुकुट सिर राजित, तिलक मनोहर रजनि करा ॥
कुण्डलि कुण्डले मण्डित श्रुति युग, नयन अन(नि)ल परिहार गरा ॥
देल यमनिका बिपुल गजाजिन, नन्दी नन्दीपाठ करा ॥
रुञ्ज मृदङ्ग बजाबथि भैरव, पाँचे बदने शिव सूत्रधरा ॥
ताल धरथि बैताल बिदूषक, नारद योगिनि गान परा ॥
खण्ड परशु तण्डव देखि हरषित, चण्डहासकर प्रमथवरा ॥
पद भरेँ व्याकुल शेश कमठ दुहु, बतनहु धरय ने पाब धरा ॥
प्रति कम्पित भय चलति रसातल, डगमग कर गिरिटुट सिखरा ॥
कर देइतेँ कङ्कन फनि उगिलल, पसरल गरल सगर नगरा ॥
अकम्पित प्रलय तरासेँ चकित सबे, सुरमुनि दनुज मनुज निकरा ॥
घुमइतेँ ससधरे बमल सुधारस, तेँ पुनु बिकल भेल इसरा ॥
हुतवह पवन कुबेर पुरन्दर बरुन बिरञ्चि बिबिध अमरा ॥
अबहु नाट परिछेद करिअ भव पुनु पुनु मागए बोरि करा ॥
प्रशात रमापति तुअ पद किङ्कर, सङ्कर सुनिय बिनति हमरा ॥
गिरिजा सहित सकल अपदुरि कए, परसन भए दिअ अभयबरा ॥

In the first Act the king, Bhīṣmaka, deliberates with his queen as to who should be the husband of his daughter, Rukmiṇī, and decides to hold a Svayaṁvara. In the next Act Rukmī, the Yuvarāja, advocates Śiśupāla, the Cedi king, as a suitable husband of his sister Rukmiṇī. The king thereupon sends for the Ghaṭakas who have arrived to plead for the candidature of Śiśupāla and that of Kṛṣṇa respectively in order to decide finally if he could give away his daughter without holding a Svayaṁvara.

The Ghaṭaka of Śiśupāla, significantly, named (after Nārada ?) 'Kalahavardhana', is

sent for in the Maithila manner to give the description of the family of Śiśupala. The Ghaṭaka's appearance is described in an entrance song :

इमे अति घटक नृपति सबे जान, सभ तहँ अधिक हमर अभिमान ॥
घटना करिअ हमहि सबे ठाम, काज एकओ ने होअ परिनाम ॥
जकरा कथा रहिअ इमे ठाढ़, तकरा हरि सों मिलइ बाद ॥
शाखा मूल कुलिन अकुलीन, सबक बिबेचन हमर अधीन ॥
नृप शिशुपाल अपन हित जोहि, कू(कु)मर निकट पठाओल मोहि ॥
सुमति रमापति कौतुक गाव, सिंह नरेन्द्र भूप बुझ भाव ॥

He pleads for the candidature of Śiśupala :

भूपतो तद्वाचिकं –
कह बुझ बोहि नमित भय कहब निवेदन मोर ।...
अइअओ तरास होअ मन तइ अओ कहिअ पुनु तोहि ।
रुकुमिनि जनम दिवस सओं आशा बाढ़हि मोहि ।
से मोर पूरिअ भूपति निज सरणागत जानि ।...
परिजन कोष सहित इमे अपना लइए सहाए ।
सतत रहब कुण्डिलपुर किंकर अनुग कहाए ॥

But when Hariballabha, the Ghaṭaka who pleads for Kṛṣṇa's candidature, comes, he concurs with the king and shows the superiority of Kṛṣṇa over Śiśupala, but pleads guilty in view of the attitude of the Yuvaraja.

The king then discusses the *pros* and *cons* of having Kṛṣṇa as the husband of Rukmiṇi. Rukmi condemns Kṛṣṇa on the score of his connection with the Gopis and on his murdering of his uncle Kaṁsa :

हमर वचन सुनिअ महाराज, एहन विचार देल कोन काज ॥...
गोप सबहुँ परिपालन जाहि, नृपति सुताबर के कह ताहि ॥
गोपवधू सओ सतत बिहार, मातुल बध नहि जाहि विचार ॥
तिरिबध गोबध जाहि अ(×) भीति, ताहि करब बर ई कोन रीति ॥

The king cannot agree with Rukmi and quotes what he had been told in defence of Kṛṣṇa :

गोपास्ते दिव्य देहा सुकृत बहु (×) युतो नन्दगोपः प्रजेशो ।
गोप्यस्ताश्चाप्सरोऽशाव(द्य)बभूवेनिता देव राजानुमत्या ॥

कंसोऽरिष्टश्च दैत्यः कपट धृत तनुः पूतनाचासुरन्नी ।
वेरिन्द्रोबास्त्वयोकात्रिभुवनमहिते माधवे ते गुणास्तु ॥

The poet evidently is utilising this situation to defend the charges against the Lord, in philosophical terms.

The Yuvaraja threatens to leave the palace when the king decides finally to have Kṛṣṇa as his son-in-law :

जनक बचन सुनि कोपित भए भने घटकराव लए साथ ।
काढि विभूषन सकल मनोहर चाप बाण गहि हाथ ॥
रूसि विभूषन सकल मनोहर चापबाण गहि हाथ ॥
रूसि चलल कुमार, हमे नहि सुनबे एहन विचार ॥ ध्रुवम् ॥ Etc.

Thereupon, it is decided to hold a Svayaṁvara. In giving instructions for inviting princes from all over the country, the names of several countries are mentioned which throw a light on the geographical knowledge of an average Maithila in the middle of the 18th century :

हे द्विज करिअ हमर उपकार ।

ई सबे जनपद तोरित गमन कए न्योंतिअ भूप कुमार ॥ ध्रुवम् ॥
अङ्ग, बङ्ग, गुजरात ओड़इसा कस्तर कच्छ कलिङ्ग ॥
द्राविड़ मरहट केरल सोरठ कारनाट तैलङ्ग ॥
देश रतनपुर अओर नागपुर मालव कटक असाम ॥
देओगढ गादा नगरी बाढ़ा राजमहल सुखधाम ॥
मगह मलापुर अओर भोजपुर देश शरे सबे सार ॥
बेतियावासी नगरी कासी जे थिक त्रिभुवन सार ॥
अन्तर बेग(र) प्रयाग मनोहर मथुरा गुनक निधान ॥
अओध कनओज नगर कुम्मांचल ओएल के नहि जान ॥
नगर कोट श्रीनगर उजागर मोरंग चीन नेपाल ॥
मारुआर हस्तिनापुर जयपुर पाटलिपुर सुविसाल ॥
मध्य भूमि मिथिला अति सुन्दर जनक महीपति देश ॥
आगम निगम पुरान विवेचन द्विजगन करि अवधान ॥
रुकुमिनि कुमरि स्वयम्बर कारने सुमति रमापति भान ॥

In the third Act Kṛṣṇa is introduced to the audience for the first time. The messenger of Bhīṣmaka delivers to him the invitation for Rukmiṇī's Svayaṁvara and gives him an idea of the beauty of Rukmiṇī. Here the poet gets an opportunity to wax eloquent in praise of Rukmiṇī :

राजकुमारि देखलि हमे विधि वलेँ सखि अङ्गे ।
निज करेँ कुन्हि मनोभव सिरजल तसु अङ्गे ॥
तडित उपर शशि तापर जलधर अभिरामे ।
से यदि मेदनि सञ्चर तवों पाव उपामे ॥
अरुन कमल मद मातल मम मधुकर भोरा ।
मनसिजेँ व्याध उड़ाओल की खञ्जन जोरा ॥
कीदहुँ मुख शशि पिउब पिब जुगल चकोरा ।
तसु लोचन देखि मानस संशय पडु मोरा ॥
पङ्कज कोरक निन्दक तसु उरसिग काँती ॥
तेँ जनि जलवसि अहो रिषि (?, तपकर भल भाँती ॥
मध्य विनिन्दक केहरि गिरि कन्दर गेला ।
मृदु उर जुग देखि करिवर लज्जित जनि भेला ॥
थल पङ्के सह गञ्जित तसुचरन निरेखी ।
अपनहि अवनत भय फुल तेँ बुझिय विसेखो ॥
गमने मराल वधूगन तुलना नहि पावे ।
सुमति रमापति मने गुनि शकपिनि रुप गावे ॥

Ramapati must have realized the appeal of the subsequent march of Kṛṣṇa and his troups to attend Rukmiṇī's Svayaṁvara for a valiant fighter like Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha.

Kṛṣṇa manages to convince the Rāja Bhīṣmaka, about the inadvisibility of holding the Svayaṁvara and makes him realise his own divine greatness.

In the fifth Act, however, Kṛṣṇa is shown to behave diplomatically. He asks Bhīṣmaka to give away Rukmiṇī to Śiśupāla. When Rukmiṇī learns this she becomes extremely uneasy :

सुनिअ सुवेसन सावनि करिअ उपाय बिचारि
कुसुम परम हमर बनितेँ देखि भेल मुरारि, आरे ॥ ध्रु० ॥
नलिनि सदन मलयज रजपरसेँ उपजत ताप ।
सुरभि रजनि पूरन शशि देखिअ अधिक हिअ काँप ॥
सपन विफल सुनि पिक रव कि करब हम परकार ।
निरदय भय हिरदय हन पचसर दुरबार ॥
न मिलत यदि एहि सुअवसर माधव-माधव माह ।
तओँ हम जीव परब तजि एहन करिअ जनु आह ॥
अचिरेँ पुरत तुअ अभिमत होएत सुदिन अवसान ।
गुन बुझि मधुरिपु आओत सुमति रमापति भान ॥

Narada appears at this moment and helps her by conveying her message of love to Kṛṣṇa. He induces Kṛṣṇa to cancel his previous decision and to run away with Rukmiṇī while she goes to worship Goddess Gaurī. This brings us to the sixth Act.

The climax of the play is reached when Kṛṣṇa follows Narada's advice and carries away Rukmiṇī by forces :

(नेपथ्ये)

भो भो जरासन्ध प्रभृतयो महारथिनः शृण्वन्तु भवन्तः

(ततो गीतेनवृत्तमावेदन्ति)

रुकमुद कुमर मगध महिपाल, नृप दमघोष सहित शिशुपाल ॥
सौभ सुनीथ कलिङ्गक राज सब मिलि राखिअ युज बले लाज ॥
सबहुँ धनुर्द्धर भए एक ठाम, गहिअक मान करिअ संग्राम ।
रुकमिनि करे गहि रथहि चढ़ाय, तब गेल गोविन्द गरुड़ चढ़ाय ।
जावहि निज मन्दिर नहि जाय, पथ तओँ आनिअ तावे छोड़ाय ।

Rukmī the Yuvarāja cannot tolerate this and engages himself in a fight with Kṛṣṇa. The fight is not shown on the stage following the ancient convention of Sanskrit drama, but merely described. Nārada serves the purpose of a sort of Chorus and describes all stages of the fight vividly.

Eventually Kṛṣṇa succeeds in taking Rukmiṇī to his place and marries her with due

formality. Ramapati Upadhyaya gets an occasion to give vent to his poetic powers. Songs of 'Oumaona', 'Kobara', 'Batagamani', 'Māna' etc. abound in this Act. One of the most charming of these is the famous Māna :

तोहें हम जनि सिनेह पेखसि । ध्रु० । इत्यादि

In the end all sing the Bharata-Vākya in chorus :

सर्वे गायन्ति

(तत्र गीतम्)

बारिद बारि विमुञ्चयु काले, अवनि रहयु बहु अन्ने बिशाले ॥
परजा पालि धरम अनुरूपे, मुदित रहयु मिथिलापति भूपे ॥
भारति भगति भावें थिर बासे, बुध जन मानस करयु बिलासे ॥
वसुगुन जानि हरषि तत काले, दारिद हरयु सदत महिपाले ॥
नृपति होथ्र जनु पिशुन समाजे, सानन्द रहयु सकल द्विजराजे ॥
सबिनय सुमति रमापति माँगे, रूपक करयु सुजन अनुरागे ॥

The entire play gives an impression of being written in the spirit of a devotee. This is evident in the repetition of 'हरिपद प्रनत रमापति भान' and 'मुरारि भगति गति सुमति रमापति भान' in the Bhanitās, in the silent but consistent devotion of Bhīṣmaka to the Lord of Dvārikā, in the philosophical defence of Kṛṣṇa's actions and in the constant reference to His superhuman character.

Throughout the play the poet carefully weaves 'Maithila colour' in the fabric of the Paurāṇic story : such as, the prayer to Gosauni in the beginning of the play, the use of such usual Maithila expression as 'बरबर्ब' (for a girl of marriageable age) and 'शुभाशिष(श)स्तु' (for blessing the young as 'May Good Come to You', the introduction of Ghaṭakas, the details of marriage and the songs sung on that occasion, and the stage-direction 'स्त्रियः गायन्ति' on auspicious moments. It is noteworthy that throughout the play it is emphasised that Ramapati's patron is a Maithila king.

The comparisons and descriptions of the dramatist are generally of the stock kind but in some cases there is freshness in the imagery *e.g.*,

(*a*) अविरल लोचन गर जलधार, कुवलय दल जनि मुञ्च तुषार ।

(*b*) अनुपम उपचित दुहुक सिनेहे, थिर भव दामिनि मिलु जनि मेहे ॥

किदहुँ चकोर रमनि मिलु चन्दा, कीदहुँ अलिक मलिनि मकरन्दा ।

कीदहुँ रति पुनु पाओल कहूँ, विधिवसेँ तनु धरि मिलल अनङ्ग ॥

The unities of time and place are not followed at all. Scenes follow in quick succession from Dvārikā to Kuṇḍinapura and from the battle-field to the palace. A number of characters are made to appear, but only three of them gain prominence—the indecisive Bhīṣmaka who is quiet and a good old king ; the indomitable and consistent Rukmī who meets his defeat with grace and dignity at the hands of the person for whom he had no respect ; and Nārada who plays the part of Ghaṭaka, messenger, Vidūṣaka and the God of quarrels all in one.

On the whole, Ramāpati's play deserves a high place in the history of Kīrtaniyā drama.

7. *Lála Kavi*

Lāla Kavi does not say anything about himself in his play *Gaurīsvayamvara.*[52] But traditionally he is said to have flourished at the court of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1744-1761). We do know of one Lāla Kavi who composed some excellent Hindi ballads on the victories of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha. It is not clear if

52. Available MSS of this play are : (a) with Narendranathadasa, Sakhwar, P. O. Manigachi, Dist. Darbhanga, perhaps from Vallabha Jha of Haṭṭi, This is the text from which I have quoted throughout. (b) Candrashekhara Mishra Village, Damodarpura, P. O Benipatti, Dist. Darbhanga. (c) Khusari Jha, Village. Sauraṭha, P. O. Madhubani, Dist. Darbhanga. (d) Raghava Jha Village, Anhauli, P. O. Madhavapur, Dist. Darbhanga.

the two Lāla Kavis were identical. It is, however, strange that the poet does not mention his patron's name in any of the Bhanitās. It is possible that he wrote this play merely out of love and devotion to Lord Śiva, which he expressly points out in one passage,[53] and not for the pleasure of any patron.

In this play, Lāla Kavi barely continues the frame-work of Sanskrit drama. Prākṛta and Sanskrit become extremely rare. They are used only for stage-directions and for advancing the action. Fully vernacular poetic Kīrtaniyā drama is completely made up by now. Prose passages, however, in vernacular are not yet considered fit enough to be introduced—prose was too near the common speech to find place in a literary work. Moreover, the language of Lord's Kīrttana had to be musical, tuned to some Rāga or Rāgiṇī.

The *Gaurīsvayamvara* is not divided into regular acts. It is a sort of One-Act Play portraying the story of Gaurī's marriage with Lord Śiva. The total impression upon the spectator and the reader is devotional. It is worth noting that, like the Yātrā of Bengal and the Aṅkiā Nāṭ of Assam, the Kīrtaniyā drama of Mithilā did not restrict it-self to the Kṛṣṇa cycle of Paurāṇic stories.

The play begins with a prayer to Gaurī. The Sūtradhāra explains the name and purpose of the play. Then, Kāmadeva appears in the

53 cf. सूत्र० (स्तुतिमभिनीय गद्येन कथयति) जगदखण्डमण्डल-विस्तृत दुरितान्धकारि विसरप्रचण्डमार्तण्डस्याहि मगिरिनन्दिनी वदन सरस सारस मकरन्दास्वादन तदमानों मिलिन्दस्य करुणा पारावारस्य भगवत. श्री विश्वेश्वरस्य सरस पदपंकज—परागवासुद्दिस्य ज्योतिर्विद कवि लालेन श्री गौरीस्वयम्बर नाटकमस्ति। तहिं तत्वारि तमुपहारि करोमीत्युचितं। तदलम् नर्त्तनारम्भ विलम्बेन—

back-ground. Śiva burns him by the fire of His third eye and Rati, Kāmdeva's beloved wife, mourns his loss in pathetic words:

हे हर कोन हरल मोर नाह ।
अकुल अभेद भेद नहि अरमहुँ से नहि मन अवगाह ।
पल बितलेल पहर सओ मानिअ कोन परि होएत निबाह ॥
शोक कलाप दाप दह मानस कर उपचारक चाह ।
बिरहक अवधि अबूह पड़ल कोअ चहुदिस लागु अथाह ॥
मानक आधि बेआधि बाधि बड़, रंग रभस गेल दूर ।
बिहि भेल मोर कौन निरदय मोर हरलन्हि शिरक सिन्दूर ॥
कुसुमक बान जहाँ न जकर बश सब गुन आगर कन्त ।
से मोर साथ हाथ धए लाओल की काम बन्धु बसन्त ॥
सुकवि लाल कह धैरज धय रहु हरखित होएत अनंग ।
ओ मनमथ तोहि रति पलटि पुनु होएत ने बिधि संग ॥

Thereupon, Gaurī is supposed to take to penance. Hara in disguised form approaches her to ridicule His own self so as to dissuade her from desiring Him as her husband:

जटिल भेषें देख परवेश, भसम भूषित कपिल केश ।
बालक बसन कय तेल काछ, आठहु आग बान्हि रुद्राछ ॥
भाँगक झोरा काँख बोकान, माङ्गथि फिरि फिरि भीख दोकान ।
कान्ह बिराजित उपबीत शेश, काहु न बुझि पर(शीव भि)शेष ॥
सुकवि चतुर लाल गोचर, गौरिहि गमब अएलाह हर ॥

The action progresses rapidly. A dialogue between Hara and Gauri is skilfully arranged. Gauri's spirited words are given in vigorous style:

हे सखि सबहु सुनैछिअ गारि, ककरहु तह नहि होइछ ने बारि ।
असत बचन कहने अनुतापे, बड जन निन्दा सुननहु पापे ॥
हिनका कहिअनु जाथु फिरि गामे, नहि तौं हमहि तेजइ हिअठामे ।
ई कहि चरब उठाओल जानि, चपल जटिल कर तरकि भवानि ॥
कहलन्हि शङ्कर हमरे नाम, करब बिबाह आयब निज धाम ।
एतबा सुनि गौरी हरषित भेलि, महिखन तप तेजि मन्दिर गेलि ॥
सुकवि लाल ने थिर रह काल, सुदिन सदाशिव भेलाह दयाल ।

It will be noticed that the action is also reported along with the speech

As usual Nārada makes his appearance as the Ghaṭaka of Śiva and pleads before the mother of Gauri, Menā. Menā could reconcile herself to Śiva's proposal with great hesitation. She welcomes her son in-law with mixed feelings of pleasure and pain :

मेनासे सुनि आकुलि भेलि, गौरि गोद लहि मन्दिर गेलि ॥
मारब बेटी मरब विष खाय, मन नहि छिनका करब जमाय ।
फोरब पुरहर अइपन भाँग, सभ भविआयल सिरबहु गाँग
काला हाथी चललन्हि जाय, देखन्हि चौमुखदीप मिझाय ।
हेमत चरण पकलि कत कोडि, जानहु नहि जनमलि छथि गौरि ॥
एकरा नहि आब आन उपाय, छिनकहि कएने भेल जमाय ।
सुकवि लाल सबहि बत लेलि, भनहि मनाइनि परिछए गेलि ॥

Once the marriage is sett'ed, every little detail of Maithila marriage—the 'Nainājogini', the 'Kobara', etc. is gone through. Śiva's family history is given in a language couched with humour. Śiva himself is the father and grand-father :

गौरीशङ्कर मण्डप गेल, बड़ कठिन पुरहित काँ भेल ।
बाप पितामह नाम नहि जान, कोन परि होयत कन्यादान ॥
तिनू नाम वरहिक कहि देल, तें विधि गोत्र उच्चारब भेल ।
पुरहित कयलन्हि अपन छुटानि, महाहरष भय भेल शूलपानि ॥
सुकवि लाल एहो अचरज भान, एहनो देखल बिबाह बिधान ।

The drama, which is the shortest and simplest of all Maithilī dramas so far reviewed, closes upon a happy note.

8. *Nandīpati*

Nandīpati's name is as popular in Mithila as Umāpati's or Ramāpati's. We do not know the exact date when he flourished. But we can deduce his date from what he says about his family and his ancestors in the beginning

of his only extant play *Kṛṣṇakelimālā.*[54] He belonged to the family of Puṅgauli-mulaka Brāhmaṇas of Baḍhiama. His earliest ancestor known to him was Siddha Śivadatta Jha. Śivadatta Jha had a son called Sudhāpati Jha. Sudhāpati Jha's son Raghupati Jha had four sons—Gaṅgādhara, Jayarāma, Haripati, and Sukavi Kṛṣṇapati. One of his sons, Haripati, was the very 'incarnation of Hari and his Guru was the venerable Thākura whose disciple Paṇḍita Gokulanātha Jha (Upādhyāya) was.' This helps us to identify and fix his date. MM. Gokulanatha Upādhyāya (c. 1680-1716) was the third son and disciple of MM. Pītāmbara Śarmā 'Vidyānidhi' (c. 1680.)[55]. Vidyānidhi is, however, not known to have been called 'Thākura', but he was a very great teacher and was called 'Mādhyandina-Murdhanya' (the leader of Mādhyandinas).

Nandīpati was the third son of Kṛṣṇapati who was also a poet. We cannot identify Kṛṣṇapati with any known figure in the history of Literature but it is obvious that his father's poetic talents must have influenced Nandīpati. It is also worth noting that his youngest brother Lakṣmīpati Jha was a devotee of Śiva.

Nandīpati says at the end of each Act that he has twelve names. We do not know what

54. Four MSS of this play are available : (a) with Narendranathadasa Village etc. as above. This MS has been used by me in the present work. It ends with the third Act. (b) with Haricanda Misra, Village, Harapura Silout, P. O. Virasinghapur, Dist. Darbhanga. Has four Acts. MS dated 1227 Sal=1820 A. D., (c) with Maniśvara Jha Village, Lalganj, P. O. Jhanjharapura, Dist. Darbhanga. This is perhaps the only complete MS according to the notice of it in Bihar Research Society, Patna, (d) in the Raj Library, Darbhanga. Only a page more than third Act ; small difference from MS (a) described above. Biographical details are all given in the very beginning of the work.

55. OCP XII, ii,

these names were but two names appear in the Bhanitās of the songs—'Bādari' and 'Kalānidhi'. It appears also from the Pañji that 'Bādari' was his other pen-name.

Nandīpati does not mention the name of his patron in any of his songs directly. But from the above we can confirm the tradition that makes him a contemporary of Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha (1776—1808)

The *Srī-Krsnakelimālā-nataka* begins with a long prose benediction in praise of Lord Kṛṣṇa whose sports form the subject-matter of this play. He is the first God and the leader of all Blissful creatures and the singing of his Attributes brings good upon all.

Nandīpati seems to have perfected the convention of giving the names of all dramatis personae in a song at the very beginning. The beginnings of this convention may be traced to earlier dramatists but after Nandīpati this becomes an essential part of the structure of Kīrtaniyā drama.

The story of Kṛṣṇa is related from the very beginning. Devakī is shown in labour. She is despairing as to the fate of her new baby. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is born and Vasudeva carries Him to Nanda and Yasodā. All this is merely narrated.

The tales of Kṛṣṇa's childhood are described in the next scenes : such as, the killing of the Rākṣasī Pūtanā who was sent by Kaṁsa with the intention of feeding poison to Kṛṣṇa. Pūtanā's end is brought about by the superhuman powers of Kṛṣṇa. The poet vividly describes it :

(अथ पूतना विलाप गीतम्)

हमें न एहन हरि बानल मानल अपराधे ।

न हनु न हनु खिरिपति तिरि वध अब बाधे ॥

कहहु आर कोबर ते कर मेल भागी।
आवे कति सने घन घनेरव है उर उठइछ आगी।
उगिलु उगिलु धन खिरिपति पुनु हमर निहोर।
एहन करम पुनु न करब राखह चित मोर।
नन्दीपति कवि गाओल हरिपद अनुरागि।
पुनआने पाओल परमपद हरि पहु उर लागि॥

Then follows the famous 'Śakaṭa-bhanga' līlā whereupon Yasodā becames extremely anxious and wishes to leave all work so that she may constantly look after Kṛṣṇa:

निसुदिन कुटओ पिसओ सब आन। भानस करओ धरओ धन मान॥
कि कह परिजन परिपुत लागि। जैं किछु होएत हमहिँ दुख भागि॥
नन्दीपति हम तेजब ने पाए। जैं भकि दिनेक छिनक नहि आस॥

Rādhā complains of the pranks of young Kṛṣṇa in some of the most appealing lines:

यशोमति मोर उपरागे। हरिक चरित्र माह बड़ मन्द लागे॥
कोर कुसल तोर कान्हे। दें जनु जानह हरि कुथि नान्हे॥
एतहु करथि धनपाने। ओतए करै कुथि तरुणक काने॥
जाइत जमुना पथ आबे। बनहीं बाहर मेल बहुराबे॥
आँचर धयलन्हि मारा। काल्हुक जनमल तोर किशोरा॥
तखनुक तसु बेवहारे। से की कहब हम आपन कपारे॥
पूछह सखी से आनी। नांह परमान होइत मोर बानी॥
कहहु सखीजन मन लाई। जननि यशोमति नहि पति आई॥
नन्दीपति कवि कह अवधारी। कृष्ण चरित्र सभ कुथित गोआरी॥

The episodes of Vakāsura-badha and Aghāsura-badha are briefly described before the poet passes on to the Govardhanalīlā. The homely style of these descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's childhood and adolescence are unique in Maithili Literature.

The third Act is the most important portion of this play. It deals with the stories of the youth of Kṛṣṇa, such as the famous stealing away of the clothes of Gopis while they were bathing in the Yamunā river. It abounds in

Goalari songs. In one of them the Gopis give Krṣṇa a sound lesson for teasing them every now and then. Some snatch away his head-dress, some beat him, some scold him and so on and so forth :

आगाँ पाछाँ बति छुलि, हमे गोपी एक मेलि ।
एकहि बेर हमे धसलि, कृष्णक उपर छवि खसलि ॥
कोनहु पाग कोनहु काढ़, कोनहु धएल पाव धरि ॥
केओ बाँध केओ मार, केओ ककरहुँ हाक पार ॥
गाल बूकू पीठ चाट, के ओ गोपी चिउटी काट ॥
कोनहु झटहा कोनहु चेप, केओ दही मुह लेप ॥
कान कनैठी मुक्का घाड़, ककरहु अस्त्र दूधक भाँड़ ॥
केओ घर केओ छोड़, केओ कचा कपार फोड़ ॥
काँद बाब छाती पीट, केओ थोह पाथर इँट ॥

The teasing of Krṣṇa produces, however, a kind of thrilling joy in the heart of the Gopis, even though they protest against it in so many songs. One of these songs is quoted to illustrate the treatment of the poet of this aspect of Krṣṇa's sports :

छोड़, छोड़, आँचर मोरा । माधव मोर निहोरा ॥
किए बिलमावह मोही । भल न कहत केओ तोही ॥
हमे वृषभान दुलारी । एत नहि उचित मुरारी ॥ ..
परिहरु कान्ह कुरीती । हठे नहि होइति पीरीति ॥ Etc
ऐसन करम मोर मन्दा । देलहुँ ककर दन्दा ॥
न एक धारीअ कोही । न हम तोहर नौही ॥ Etc. Etc.

In the scenes that follow Krṣṇa's love-play with Radha is portrayed. To ward off the fear of elders Radha pretends to be sick and Krṣṇa tries to play the role of an exorist. He arranges secret meetings with her and enjoys her company in spite of the elders.

Once Radha passes restless days waiting for Krṣṇa. Krṣṇa comes after a long time. She accuses him of faithlessness and refuses to

have anything to do with him. Kṛṣṇa meditates on the possible reasons why Radha is estranged :

के बान कओँन दोषेँ रुसि गेलि रामा...
रूसलि रमनि मिल हुई बड़ विधि ॥

Radha in her turn broods over her lot and regrets having behaved so apathetically towards Kṛṣṇa. She feels the sting of separation all the more because she tried to conceal her affection for Kṛṣṇa :

राखल नेह नुकाए साजनि॰ से आबे भिरहें वेकताए

and speaks out in sad and pathetic words how eager she was to unite with him :

कत उद्वेग कहब हम तोहि, सजनि गे; आब उचित एह थकि मोही ॥
आब बरु प्राण उपेखिअ, सजनि गे, फेरिने पुरुख मुख देखिअ ॥
चाड़ उपर कय हेरइति, सजनि गे, लाज सोँ हम मरइति ॥
पिआक पेअसि भय आब पुनु, सजनि गे, केओ अभिमान करय जनु ॥
आब हम ककर विलासिनि, सजनि गे, केओ जनुकइ बहुआसिनि ॥
नन्दीपति कह निरनय, सजनि गे, कारि पुरुष कपट मय ॥

Before Rādhā's 'Māna' is over, Kṛṣṇa commences his : Then her friend says to him.—

विशालाक्षी (कृष्णस्य निकटं गत्वा गीतेन —
माधव भलने कहत केओ तोही, तेँ तोहि ओतए पिअसि पठाओलि मोही ॥
तोहेँ नहि तेहन अकर होए हस्ती, सुपुरुष पुरुष न बिसर पेआसी ॥
राधा कथा सुनि ओहिठाम, पल से पथिक करए बिभाम ॥
नोर नयन मुख हरि हरी, आब आरसि जनि मेरलि पुतरी ॥
सपनहु आब नहि रूसति राधे, सुपुरुष पै छेमिअ अपराधे ॥
नन्दीपति कवि कह परमाने, पाछिल सर मोहि केओ जनि जाने ॥

When the two are finally united, Kṛṣṇa assures Rādhā that she should not have been afraid of his 'Māna' :

ताहा कोँ नहि भाग कि राहु गरासल चन्दा तकरहि मारथि Etc.

Some Mss. of the play end here ; others go one Act beyond this.

This is one of the most attractive vernacular plays of Mithila. It has very few Sanskrit and Prākṛta passages; the songs form the major portion of the play. There is rarely any complexity of style, action or character. The action is more often reported or described in the songs and the verses than staged; the consequent gain in speed is immense. The poet is satisfied if a broad impression of a 'līlā' is given. Of course, certain things are shown on the stage as well. At one place when Nārada is talking to Kaṁsa the stage-direction is particularly revealing as to the manner of acting these Kīrtaniyā plays. The Sūtradhāra and Naṭī are made to talk, and remind us of the presence of Sūtradhāra in the Aṅkiā Nāṭ throughout the play :

नारद—सर्व्वदा शुभमस्तु । यद्यपि पितृव्य पुत्रिका कुवाक्येन किञ्चिद्विचार विमुखोऽपि तथापि नारदोऽपदेशेन विलाशकलो परिताप नाभि प्रायेन स्थिता । देवी कंस कथादुन्मुक्ता चान्तर्हिता इत्येवं दश नान्तरमिदमाश्चर्यं सर्वे भावन्ति । गतासि गतासि देव्यागमनस्य किञ्चिदूर्ध्वं दशां गत्वान्तरं कंसासुर प्रतिवदीरितं तद्गीतेन समीचीन प्रकारेण गायन्ति नर्त्तको (इत्यभिप्रायेणात्र—गीतं समीरितं नायिकाया)

सूत्र—आर्ये इत्येव बोधव्यं ।

नटी—आर्य्य उत्तको विशेश्ये एदं श्रुतं कैयोदं अनुगीतं (Song follows.)

'Maithila colour' is provided by attempting to introduce Maithila usages when, for example, Kṛṣṇa's birth is celebrated or when Kṛṣṇa is described as a boy or when on the day of Indra's worship the Gopas prepare food.

The superhuman character of Kṛṣṇa is stressed now and then, and at one place Nanda expressly prays to God in the form of Kṛṣṇa :

(अथनन्द भाषितं परमेश्वरस्य कीर्तनं गीतं)

जय जय जगपति दीनदयाल • जनि राखब मोर कामिनि बाल ॥

अमित कएल जनि हुँ उतपात • जुग जुग रहओ अधिक पक्षपात ॥

जाहि कुमर सुर नर सब काल • से तुम वचन करहु रखपाल ॥
बालक पालक पर उपकारि • अशरन सरन उचित अनुसारि ॥

The introduction of Sanskrit verses no less than the vernacular verses (Dohās) sound a welcome change to the ear after continuous singing of Tirhutis, Baṭagamanīs and Goalrīs, which are, however, the glories of Nandīpati's achievement.

9. *Gokulánanda*

Gokulānanda is inadequately known to us. He does not say anything about his life and times in the portions available. He is, however, traditionally said to belong to 'Sotipurā' (the area of Śrotriya Brāhmanas' residences) possibly Ujāna or Sarisava was his native village, and to have flourished after Nandīpati in the reign of Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha (1776-1868). He may be identified with Gokulanātha Śarmā[56] of Sarisava son of Sadāśiva Śarmā (contemporary of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha and Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha). But we have no proof to confirm this identification.

The play of Gokulānanda is called *Mánacaritanataka*[57] and is in seven Acts. But unfortunately, it is not available in full as yet. It begins with a prayer to Śakti :

(अथ मंगलाचरण गीतेन)

जय जय भारति भगवति देवि । क(क)ने मुदित रहु तुअ पद सेवि ॥
चन्द्रधवल रुचि देह विकाश(स) । श्वेत कमलपर करहु निवास ॥

56. Badarinaiha Jha, *Kâśyapakulapraśasti*, p. 15 16 There is one more Gokulanatha of village Ujāna, of the family of करमहर नडुआर who married the great Gokulanatha Upadhyaya of मडुलॉनी's daughter (This information I owe to Pt. Ramanatha Jha)

57. I have not been able to secure this play. The Bihar Research Society notices it at the place of Ananda Jha, P. O. Pindarueha, Dist. Darbhanga, My quotations are from its notice.

श्रीकमल रचिता कलारि । कहत मगन मिथिला कुमारि ॥
जन्म मरण नहि होहि ज्यानि । मिद्धकाव तन मिगुणा वानि ॥
प्रकृत अंबर कम्बुर्क (?) समान । तीनि नयन मिचा बरदान ॥
गोकुल मधुक वनित मान । देहु परम पद दायक वान ॥

It is concise but suggestive praise of the Primal Energy (the Âdiśakti).

The play ends in a Brajabhāṣa (Hindi) poem celebrating the union of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

10. Śivadatta

Some scholars are disposed to identify Śivadatta with Śivadatta the ancestor of Nandīpati[58]. But this is not possible as Śivadatta's language is very much modern. Indeed, he may have appeared even later than when we have placed him here (*i. e.* after Gokulānanda)[59].

Śivadatta does not mention the name of his patron at all. His extant plays are only two: the *Pārijātaharaṇa* [60] and the *Gaurī-Pariṇaya* (in two versions)[61].

His *Pārijātaharaṇa* does not have the humour and perfection of Umāpati's play on the same subject. But in easy and quick transition of events and in profusion of Vernacular passages, it has achieved some success.

58. *e. g.* in MSS in the possession of Narendranathadasa it is noted :—

सिद्ध पुरुष शिवदत्त भा वास जनिक पटिआम ।
तनिक ई नाटिका थिक पारिजात नाम ॥

59. *e.g.* One MS of Śivarāma author of Subodhinī (MMC IV, p 337), is to be dated 1913 Samvat=1856 AD., if he is to be identified as our poet, which is not likely.

60. MS with Narendranathadasa, Village etc. as above.

61. MSS with Jivananda Thakura, Asst. Librarian, MS Section, Raj Library, Darbhanga. I have used them.

The play begins with a long 'Maṅgala'-song by the Sutradhara in praise of Śakti in her various forms. The wife of the Sutradhāra, Naṭī, describes the entrance of all the *dramatis personae* in the usual manner. Then, follows the action proper.

The story is the same as in Umāpati's *Pārijātaharaṇa* except that Narada is not made to sell Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna in a humourous vein in the end. Kṛṣṇa's appearance is described in attractive terms—in yellow garb, with crown on the head and a long garland in the neck. Rukmiṇī is happy in the midst of her friends when Kṛṣṇa gives her the Pārijāta flowers. Nārada makes his appearance to set the action a-going. He goes to Satyabhāmā, makes out a case for her anger against Kṛṣṇa and generally incites her to request Kṛṣṇa for not only one Pārijāta but the Pārijāta tree itself.

In the next scene—there is no marked out scene but we are supposed to imagine the change—Satyabhāmā is shown to be furious. She showers sharp epigrams on Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa accepts her request and brings the Pārijāta tree after a fight with Indra. As in the Sanskrit drama, the fight is described and not presented on the stage. The Māna of Satyabhāmā is undone. Śivadatta shows great delicacy in depicting this.

(अथ मानभङ्गगीतम्)

बेमुखि सुमुखि भय सदय हृदय कय बाँके नयन हरि हेरि
कीदहुँ रङ्ग परसमणि पाओल बिहुँसि हसलि मुख मोरि ।
आध अधर पर छूटल चिकुर लट मनमथ हरि मन जाग । Etc.

In the second play, *Gaurīpariṇaya*, Śivadatta is less like the structure of the Sanskrit drama, but he is able to arouse our emotions much more deeply.

Gauri sees Siva while walking in her garden and falls in love with him :

माइ सखि पाइल शिवक सिनेह गेह नहि जाएब हे ।

She practices penance to obtain him as her husband. Śiva approaches her in disguise to test her sincerity. Śiva portrays an unseemly and even terrible picture of his own self. As in Kalidasa's *Kumárasambhava*, Gauri cannot tolerate all this, and her anger bursts forth in the following words :

धिक धिक सखि तोहर गेआने । एतेक गारि सुनै शिव काने ॥
सुनि मन होइछ परम अनुतापे एत निन्दा सुनने अति पापे ॥
उत्कट वचन सखी नहि नीक । के जन कतय वस केदहु धिक ॥
परम रोखित गोरि सखी मुख हेरि । सभ मिलि कहिअ बाउ पछ फेरि ॥
अनुचित वचन सुनि मन वाम । उचित मोहि पर तेजिअ ठाम ॥
प्रेमक वचन सुनल शिवकान । मन गुनि शिवदत्त पद भान ॥ १० ॥

Śiva then declares his identity and agrees to become her husband. The joy of Gauri knows no bounds. It is reflected even in Nature. The poet carefully describes how the waters, the trees and the animals are shaken by the Cupid :

निर सौं मिलल नीर ना । मोहित मेल समीर ना ॥
तरु तरु मेल संयोग ना । पशु मन बाढ़ल भोगु ना ॥
रहल न कोइ जग धीर ना । सभ मन मनमथ पहि ना ॥
भमर समर नहि चैन ना । बाढ़ल सभ मन मैन ना ॥
मुनिगण छोड़ल धेआन ना । शीवदत्त पद भान ना ॥ १६ ॥

Then Śiva falls into a meditative mood and not all the powers of Kamadeva are able to break it. Śiva becomes angry and burns him. Kamadeva's wife, Rati, mourns his loss in pitiful words :

कहु कहु शङ्कर की कैल मे तोर । बिनु दोख नाह हरन भेल मोर ॥
कौन परि जनम चितल प्रिय मोर । तोह किए मेलाह निपटक चोर ॥
रोदन सुनि कह मदहगामि । धैरज धरहु मिलत तोंमामि ॥

Yet Narada, the Ghaṭaka of Śiva goes to Gauri's father Rāja Hemata and pleads for his candidature. Mangini becomes angry at having such an old and penniless son-in-law as Śiva; she cries out :

हमने करब बर बूढ़ ॥ हे राजा ॥ ध्रु० ॥
तीनि भुवन फिरि बर बोहि आनल जाहि होयत कलंक ॥
एहि तह उचित मन मोर सुन्दर कतेक सहब मन पीर ।
राजकुमारि भिखारि बिआहत झुमरि नैन ढर नीर ॥
देखि नगन बर नगर सगर हँसती देब उत्तर ताहि ।
हिम मोर साल गौरि मुख देखि देखि अब हम होएब बताह॥६

At this place Śivadatta flings a caustic remark on the evil custom of old marriage in contemporary Maithila society :

ससक परलि गिरिरानी ॥ मानस बर सुलपानी ।
तिरहुति रिति मनमानी । बूढ़ बर कर बहु बानी ।
मैथिल लौकिक देखी । निज मन रोख उपेखी ।

Eventually the marriage of Śiva takes place. Śivadatta beautifully presents all customs of Maithila marriage with pointed reference to Śiva's peculiar figure—serpents, the garland of skulls, and long coils of hair—and to his motley crowd of attendants. Nobody finds it possible to welcome him in the परिछनि ceremony. Mangini alone manages to conduct the ceremony.

In the end all ends well and they sing Śiva's Maṅgala :

सखि सब मङ्गल गाओल । गौरि उचित बर पाओल ।
शिवदत्त एहो पद भान । तोरित पुरह शिव मोर मन ॥४०॥

There is a second version of this play. It is, however, like a brief summary of the original in the form of a long poem.

There are certain repetitions even in the original, and the order of events is somewhat confused. Śivadatta marks the stage when vernacular drama was becoming rather a

long recitation by Chakaḍabaji Naṭua who also acted the Kirtaniya drama.

11. *Karna Jayánanda*

Jayānanda of Karṇa Kāyastha class does not indicate in his drama the time when he exactly flourished. But in one of his independent poems he expressly says that he was a contemporary of Maharaja Mādhavasiṁha (1776-1808).

The only known play of Jayānanda is *Rukmángadanataka*[62]. It begins with a benedictory song in praise of Lord Śiva.

नटमलावि रागे

मनछि विकारन वारन कारण मनसिज कएल विदेह ।
तेअओ देव अर्धनारि कुर एत बड़ गौरि सिनेह ॥
जय शंकरा शंकरा जोग भोग उपभोग परा ॥ध्रु०॥
आध मौलि जटाजूट विकट अति आध चिकुर अभिरामे ।
आधा भाल सिन्दुर बिन्दु शोभित आध तिलक हिम धामे ॥
आध कलेवर भसम धवल वर आध अगर अंगरागे ।
आधा हृदय हार मुकुतावलि आध विराजति नागे ॥
पटप(?) बघम्बर अम्बर सुललित अभिँ अ विषम विष पाने ।
मंगल सहित मनोरथ पूरथु करण जयानन्द भाने ॥

It is an excellent description of the Ardhanārīśvara form of Śiva : What a great love the Lord had for Gauri when He made her a part of His own body, though He had killed the very God of Love when he had tried to arouse amorous feelings for her. The two halves of

62. I have not been able to get any copy of this play in spite of my best efforts. Two MSS of it are known to exist : (a) with Anantalāla Pāthaka (?) brother of Maṇi Pathaka), Village, Kariyana, P. O. Ballipur, Dist. Darbhanga ; and (b) with Ādyanātha Misra, Village, Gangauli P. O. Manigachi, Dist. Darbhanga.

the Lord represent the union of the soft and the rough, the fair and the crude, and the delicate and the terrible—a great lesson of life in general.

In the end, King Rukmāṅgada celebrates the coronation of his son Dharmāṅgada with a song :

गीत ॥ आज सुदिन हरि दरसन पूरल मनोरथ मोर।

हरषि निधान सुखे आएल पुलकति नयन चकोरा रे ॥

चानन कुंकुम अगर उगारल अनुपम देहारे। Etc.

The complete play is not available as yet.

12. *Śrīkānta Gaṇaka*

The author of *Śrī-Kṛṣṇajanmarahasya*,[63] Śrīkānta Gaṇaka, *alias* Jhaḍunā, does not mention the time when he flourished. He quotes two poems from Sukavilāla. This Lāla Kavi may be identified with Lāla Kavi author of *Gaurīsvayamvara* and contemporary of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1744-1761). He must have, therefore, flourished later than Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha. He may be placed, however, in mid-Nineteenth century on the basis of his language.

His play is probably named after a Sanskrit piece popular in Mithila from the *Bhaviṣya-purāṇa*, called 'Viṣṇujanmarahasya'. Like the pure vernacular plays of this period, Śrīkānta's play practically excludes Sanskrit.

63. MS in the Bihar Research Society Library, Colophone :—

रचितं जन्मरहस्यं गणकाभिधेतन रसिकेन भवतु ..जनानां सदपि सभान् स्वकन्तिवु। इति श्री झडुना प्रसिद्ध श्रीकान्त विरचितां श्रीकृष्ण—जन्म रहस्य समास ॥

My quotations are from this MS. Another MS. is with Candresvara Thakura, Village Cataria, Darbhanga.

The *Srikrsnajanmarahasya* uses in the middle of it certain set prose descriptions to describe the night and certain other things. These 'Varnanas' are also found in Nandipati's *Srikrsnakelimālānātaka*. Probably they belong to the tradition of the *Varnaratnākara*, and seem to have been used even in other dramas too. They were probably supplied orally by the actors at suitable places.

The action of the play begins with Narada's appearance before Kamsa's court. He announces that Devaki's son will kill Kamsa:

(नारदक उक्ति कंशलग)

अद बुद एक सुनल हमँ सुरपुर मन मेल परम बिरामे ।
देवकि तनए तह कंस महीपति मन्द तोहर परिनामे ॥

On Narada's advice Kamsa decides to put Devakī and Basudeva into prison.

The second Act shows Devakī distressfully crying for what had happened to her children. She appeals to Narada for the way out and Narada advices her to pray to Krsna. Krsna appears in person and consoles her. Then, she passes her months of pregnancy in peace. On the appointed night, Krsna takes his birth. The poet gets an opportunity to give vent to his imagination in describing the darkness of the night of the birth of the Lord and the state of Devakī's mind:

'हरि हेरि दुख दुरि गेला ।
पुलकित मानस मेला ॥

Basudeva and Devakī are happy to get Krsna as their son. The doors of the prison open automatically and Basudeva takes the new born baby to Yasodā and brings her baby instead. Kamsa learns of the birth of a child to Devaki. All her entreaties fail to convince him of the wrong he inflicted upon her new born baby's so far;

(कंसासुरवध्वो प्रतिपक्ष गीतेन करुणवति)
है दाया न करह मोर निदाने ॥ ध्रुवपदमिदम् ॥
जतनओ........भंगलह ताए परवाने ॥
कि हमे कएल तोहर कम छम तों है मोर कँसँ प्रह(त्रा)ने ॥
कन्तहि हरल सहबे के, फर कव हमर अवत अवमाने ॥
हमहि छताए कओन फल पओवह तैं सए देह बखाने ।
हितमए अरि सरि काय करह करि पिसुन वचन अनुमाने ॥
बालक शोक जेहन जननी काँ ताहि कहव अनुमाने ।
आपने बौं उनमाद भरल कह पूछि देखह बखाने ॥
माया मोँह तोहँ, सभ तैंजलह ठामहि रहत गुमाने ।
निरदए हृदय तें अओ दया नहि सुकवि गावक इहमाने ॥

On the other hand, Yasodā's house is full of joy and hilarity. Several 'Sohara' and other auspicious songs celebrate the birth of the child. The play ends upon a happy note.

The general impression on reading this play is that of simplicity and directness in dramatising the theme of Kṛṣṇa's birth. There is no florid or figurative language, no flights of passionate or lyrical feeling. The melody and grace of the songs here are unusual in the later Kīrtaniyā drama.

13. *Kānhārāmadāsa*

Kānharāmadāsa belonged to Karṇa Kāyastha class and was the son of one Haladharadāsa. This Haladharadāsa is different from the Hindi poet Haladharadāsa of Padmaula in district Muzaffarpur who wrote his poem *Sudāmācarita* in 1658.[64] For, Kānharāmadāsa says that he composed his play *Gaurīsvayaṁvaranāṭaka* in 1764 Śāke or 1899 Vikrama Saṁvata (= 1842 A. D.)[65].

64. JAYANTI, p. 432 ff.

65. The MS of this play was made available to me by Babu Narendranāthadāsa, Village etc. as above. It is in Ślokas, Dohās, Soraṭhās, Chandas (Hargītikā), gītas, and Kavittas.

His play is the most complete Maithili play available on the marriage of Gauri with Siva. Like most of the Kirtaniya plays of this period, it makes no reference to any patron.

It begins with prayers to Gaṇeśa, Gosāuni and Kamalā. The backgroud of Pārvatī's birth as Himālaya's daughter is explained before we plunge into the main action. Narāda appears and announces that Gaurī is destined to be married to a mad person. Manaini, Himālaya's wife, becomes very anxious about such future of her daughter and she speaks out :

कहिअनाथ मुनि बात हम नहि बूझल ।
घरबर कुल परिवार निकल जओ पाबिअ ।
गौरी जोग बर होए बिआह करबिअ ॥
गौरी कुमारि रहति से बरु सहब ।
बूढ़ भिखारि कुभेस से नहि करब ॥
प्राण पिआरि दुलारि उमा पहु जानिअ ।
तेहन करिअ बर जोहि देखि सुख मानिअ ॥
ई कहि हैमत पिआरि पिआ पद गहल ।
सहित सिनेह गिरिजा बचन अब कहल ॥
सोच बिसारि पिआरि राम सुमरु मन ।
से करि हब कल्यान कन्हाराम भन ॥

Himālaya consoles her by assuring her that the only way out is to make Gauri practise penance to get Śiva as her husband who will be the fittest person under the circumstances :

जओं वोहि बेटीक नेह, रानी हे, कहीअ सिखाबहु सेह ॥
तप जओ करब भवानि, रानी हे, तखन मिलब सुलपानि ॥
ताब न भेटत कलेस, रानी हे, बिनु परसन महेस ॥
नारद कहल बिचारि, रानी हे, बरगुन निधि त्रोपुरारि ॥

Consequently, Gaurī puts herself to all sorts of hardships. Some of these are described in picturesque style. For example, Gaurī is made to roam about in search of flowers etc. to worship Siva's image.

भमि भमि विपिन तोड़ल दल फूल, अनेक कुसुम दल तोड़ि उदफुल ॥
बेलि चमेली कुन्द नेवार । तोड़ल भीड़ल ताकि अंगार ॥
धूपदीप नैवेद कर, तूल पुजिय सदाशिव होथि अनुकूल ॥
करथ कठीन व्रत गौरि त्रिकाल, बरिअ आब हर दीन दयाल ॥

At this stage Śiva is shown to mourn the loss of Satī, and he falls into a deep meditation of Viṣṇu. Rama appears and consoles him by asking him to marry Gauri the daughter of Himālaya:

(श्री रामचन्द्र श्री शिव पहँ आगमनं तस्य गीत)

सुनु शिव, ओ रे, कह हरी, उमा सभ के सब तब करी ॥
बहु विधि, ओ रे, सराहल, शिव निज प्रेम निबाहल ॥
पुनि हरि, ओ रे, बुझाओल, गौरीक जन्म सुनाओल ॥
गुन सब, ओ रे, गौरी कर, कहल राम सूनल हर ॥
बिनती, ओ रे, सुनिअ हर, जाए होइअ गौरी वर ॥
एह वर, ओ रे, माँगिअ, 'कन्हाराम' कह मानिअ ॥

Meanwhile Umā receives the seven Ṛṣis who try to make sure of the steadfastness of Umā's love for Śiva. They are convinced that she would have Śiva alone even though the soft snow may turn into harsh stone:

(पार्व्वती कथयति गीतं असावरी रागे)

बोली विहुसि भवानी, मुनि हे, सुनिअ तोहि बड़ ज्ञानी ॥
हेम उपल भए जाए, मुनि हे, हठ न प्रीति दुराए ॥
नारद वचन न त्यागे, मुनि हे, शिव पद चित अनुरागे ॥
अवगुन भरल महेसे, मुनि हे, तनि पद प्रीति हमेसे ॥
विष्णु गुन निधि वामे, मुनि हे, तनिक न मोहि किछु कामे ॥
कन्हाराम कवि गावे, मुनि हे, शिव छाड़ि दोसर न भावे ॥...
रहब घर कुमारि बरु हर बिनु ने आनहि ताक हे ॥

She is assured that Śiva would accept her, and she goes back to her home. The mother's love for her daughter is painted in moving words when Menā, Gauri's mother, embraced her back after hard penances in the home.

In the next scene we are shown Śiva coming to the home of Gaurī in a very fantastic dress. The poet finds opportunity to express his sense of the grotesque in describing Him :

आएल सङ्कर विकट वश मेल, देल गिरिराज नग परवेस ॥
माल झलक तिलक राकेस, रूप भयङ्कर उपर सेस ॥
ठाढ़ मेल हर द्वार गिरीस, डमरु बजाव बाज नहि ईस ॥
बघम्बर पट देल ओढ़ाए, बैसल मगन मन धूनी लगाए ॥
खबरि मेल नृप मन्दील रानि, भिखिलय बहार मेलि कुमरि भवानि ॥

Śiva sees Umā in this visit but once again decides to meditate. It is not clear if this is an episode innovated by Kanhārāma or an outcome of confusion in the text.

Then follows the birth and achievemants of Tāḍakāsura who became difficult to control. Brahmā reveals to Indra and other Gods that he could be suppressed by the son born of Śiva and Gaurī. Thereupon Kāmadeva, the God of Love, is asked to divert Śiva from his meditation and to make him agree to marry Gaurī. Kāmadeva's influence on all beings is maddening:

सबक विवेक दुरि मेले, काम विवस सब मेले ॥
जोगी जती तप ध्याने, छाड़ि बुलल रसपाने ॥
तेजल सब सद्ग्रन्थे, बिसरल सुकृत पन्थे ॥
वेद विधान बिसारि, प्रेम मगन नर नारि ॥
धनु सर जत्न देल मारे, धीरज जगत बिसारे ॥
मदन कएल बिपरीति, काहु रहल नहि धीती ॥
निज निज तेज मरजादे, सबय काम रस स्वादे ॥
करन कन्हाराम गावे, पुनि जनि हो असभावे ॥

But Śiva refuses to succumb to Kāmadeva and burns him with the fire of his Third Eye. Kāmadeva's wife (Rati) laments the loss of her husband: किअ पहु हरल हमार, हे हर, किअ... ॥ But her lament here is not as moving as that in Lala Kavi's *Gaurīsvayamvara*.

The leader of Gods, Indra, then approaches Śiva and requests him to agree to marry Gaurī in the interest of Gods who were being harassed by the demon, Tāḍakā. Mahādeva consents. The Seven Ṛṣis formally carry Śiva's proposal to Himālaya. The latter consults his people and agrees to give away his daughter to him.

In celebrating the forth-coming marriage the entire capital participates :

हाट बाट जत पुर महँ रे सब गली बजारे।
कनकहि सबहि बन्धाओल रे जगमग झलकारे।
कनय भवन भरि पुर भेल रे नृप देल बनवाए।
पैघ छोट लखि पर नहि रे धनपति समुदाए।
नृप मन्दिर मणिमय रचि रे सोभा अधिकाए।

Śiva's friends make elaborate preparation to go to Himālaya's palace. The poet waxes eloquent in several songs on the combination of opposites, and that of the grotesque and the fantastic, in Śiva's appearance. The following song represents one of these :

(पुनः दोसर ग्राम लोक उक्ति गीतं गायति)

उमत उगन बर चलल बिवाह कर है ॥ आगे माई ॥
उमते सङ्ग बरिआत एहन बर केकर है।
नगन सतत रहला जन तन मेह है ॥ आगे माई ॥
भसम भरल भरि गात एहन बर के कर है।
बूढ़ झुझुर बर खाय धुथर फर है ॥ आगे माई ॥
थरथर कपइत देह एहन बर केकर है।
उमग गात चल नयन अनलधर है ॥ आगे माई ॥
भूतप्रेत सिनेह एहन ,बर केकर है।
त्रिशूल खट्‌ङ्ग धर असुभ भेल बर है ॥ आगे माई ॥
देखइत परम भयान एहन बर केकर है।
धिकाह सुन्दर बर कवल कुरूप हर है ॥ आगे माई ॥

Himālaya invites all, Hills, Rivers and Brooks, Forests and Oceans. They all participate in the marriage. Gaurī is shown to observe

Kumarama and other customs of Maithili marriage.

This play is in many ways superior to other Maithili plays on Śiva. It has sometimes confusing lines, but on the whole the poet remarkably arranges the four threads of the plot: (1) the coming of Nārada to announce Gaurī's fate, (2) Gaurī's penances, (3) Śiva's meditation and (4) the breaking of it and his marriage. Indeed, the scenes alternate in such marked out units that they may well be put into separate Scenes or Acts. Of course, Kanhārāma, like the Elizabethan playwrights of England, does not divide his play into Acts. Kanhārāma has a marked sense of the dramatic and is able to produce the complete development of the "irregular" type of Kīrtaniyā drama.

14. *Ratnapāṇi*

With Ratnapāṇi we are very familiar. He is a well-known author of several Sanskrit works on Karmakāṇḍa and Dharmaśāstra.[66] He was first at the court of Mahārāja Chatrasiṁha (1808 1839) but passed his days mainly at the court of Mahārāja Rudrasiṁha (1839-1850). He composed his vernacular drama *Uṣāharaṇa*[67] under the patronage of the next king Mahārāja Maheśvarasiṁha (1850-1860). Therefore, he may be said to have flourished roughly between 1833 and 1853.

He belonged to the Gangaulīmūla. His father Jīveśvara Jha lived in a village called Parasā near the Kośi, but later on settled at

66. See MMC. I pp 41, 63 64, 337, 341-42, 344, 498, 505, and II iii p. 88 and Introduction to *Uṣāharaṇa* by Ramanatha Jha.

67. Edited along with an introduction by R. Jha in *Sāhitya Patra, Darbhanga*. Biographical facts have been based on this introduction.

Navani. The poet was born at Navani He had six brothers, all scholars. His grandson was the famous Naiyāyika of the Twentieth century—Dharmadatta Jha *alias* Bacca Jha, the late Principal of the Dharmasamaj College, Muzaffarpur.

His only Known play *Usāharananatika* is in the Kirtaniyā tradition and represents a very scholarly and dignified kind of Kirtaniyā play. There are now and then long Sanskrit songs and dialogues interspersed with vernacular passages. This raises the tone of the whole drama and makes it appear "classical". He is very careful in the exposition of his story, in the richness of his descriptions, and in the general impression of 'Śānti' and 'Bhakti' Rasas.

The play is divided into four uneven parts. The first part describes Gaurī granting to Uṣā the daughter of one Bāṇāsura of Sonitapura, the boon of getting a desirable husband in a dream on an appointed day, to Uṣā the daughter of Bāṇāsura. This boon controls the entire action of the play.

On the appointed day, Uṣā sees Aniruddha, son of Pradyumna son of Kṛṣṇa, and enjoys his company in her dream. She learns the identity of Aniruddha through her friend Citralekha who paints the portraits of several princes to enable her to identify the person whose company Uṣā enjoyed in her dream. Citralekhā then arranges to go to Aniruddha with the message of Uṣā. She prays to Goddess Durga who enables her to do this :

सुमरि दुर्गाचरण-सारस भजिअ मानस लाए ।
पुरत है सखि कामना तुअ गौरी भक्त सहाय ॥
देवता सभ विपति पड़ि गेल तखन कएल विचार ।
भजिअ सभ मिलि देवि दुर्गा आन नहि परकार ॥
तखन सुरसरितीर गए कइ सखि आराधन मेल ।
छुटल सभ दुख मोदमय भए भवन निज सभ गेल ॥

एहि उत्तर चित्र लेखा कएल दुर्गाभक्ति ।
गगन बाणी तखन भए गेल काज साधनशक्ति
रत्नपाणि विचारि भाखथि सुनिअ विचार ।
सतत दुर्गाचरण सेविअ आन नहि परकार ॥ ८ ॥

It is worth noticing that Ratnapāṇi the devotee of Śakti gets an opportunity to express his faith in Durgā.

On her way Citralekhā meets Nārada. Nārada points out the difficulties in approaching Aniruddha. He helps her, however, to take away the hero secretly with the help of the black-art (magic).

Aniruddha then marries Uṣā according to Gāndharva rite and engages himself in love sports with her. It is remarkable how simply and quietly the meeting of the hero and the heroine is described. Vidyāpati would have made capital out of such a situation. It only confirms that Ratnapāṇi is primarily a 'Bhakta'-poet.

Meanwhile, the news of Uṣā's meeting with Aniruddha is conveyed by the gate-keepers to Uṣā's father. Bāṇāsura asks them to kill the intruder. Uṣā now loses all courage and despairs of her beloved. But Aniruddha makes up his mind to fight with them. A description of his brave fight follows. He is able to defeat them all.

The Dewan of Bāṇāsura advises him then to resort to 'māyāyuddha' (magic fight). This appeals to him and he is able to tie Aniruddha in a Trap of Snakes and refrains from killing him only when his Dewan checks him from doing so on grounds of public morality. He decides to imprison him for the time being.

Uṣā's mental state is indescribable. She pines away in the thought of her beloved. Her lean and thin body has been suggestively

compared to 'a line of the lightening which some-how throbs with vitality'.

Narada sees all this invisibly and goes to inform Kṛṣṇa all about Aniruddha's misfortunes.

In Dvārikā everybody is in anger at the secret disappearance of Aniruddha. What an audacity to arouse the enemity of Kṛṣṇa, the victor of all the worlds!

तखन द्वारका भए गेल सोर। रतिपतिकेँ हरलक चोर॥
देखि रुकुमिनि रतिक विलाप। सुनि कहु ककर हृदय नहि काप॥
के मोर हरलक चान चकोर। तीनि भुवन हरिखेँ के जोर॥
सभ कहु सभ मिलि तेजब प्राण। पाओब रतिसुत तेहि पथ जाण॥
तखन कृष्ण मिलि सभ परिवार। एकत भए कहु कएल विचार॥
के जग करत हमर प्रति मन्द। ककर कोशाओल अछि नहि फन्द॥
सुर सुरपति नर जत भवलोक। हमर दुःख ककर नहि शोक॥
सभ यादव मिलि कएल विचार। के हरलक रतिपतिक कुमार॥

Under such circumstances Narada arrives and discloses the whereabouts of Aniruddha. Kṛṣṇa goes to rescue him. He succeeds in completely routing the keepers of the prison. Bāṇāsura indicates his itch of fighting some stout person and Kṛṣṇa assures him that he will satisfy him:

तुअ भुज-कण्डुनि शमन कए, तखन बजाओब नाम।
अब किअ करह विलम्ब रख, बाणासुर निजधाम॥

But when Bāṇāsura is defeated he goes to Śiva who is ever ready to fulfil the wishes of his devotees. He appears in person to help Bāṇāsura. Kṛṣṇa feels it very awkward to fight with him:

(कृष्ण आइ शिवं प्रति)

बाण सुर-अरि विदित शंकर, तकर कारण आब।
तखन मोहिँ तोहि युद्ध सम्भव, ककर होइछ लाज॥

But Śiva replies that he could not go back upon his words;

(उचरं शिव आह)

मक बरा हम जगत जानए। सुनिअ बाबराब।
कहल से फेरि अखन फेरब। तखन की शिव काज।

This time it was a really great battle between the two parties. In the course of it there was introduced a war of fevers (ज्वरयुद्ध). Śiva makes everybody sick in Kṛṣṇa's camp:

आए हलधर-तनु समाएल, उठए हिम अति ज्वाल।
तखन हरि सँ कहल हलधर, उठय तनु अति दाह।
करब की हम अभय मेलहुँ, जेहन नाग गराह।
हरि क तनु पर आए पहुँचल ततए कएलक कोप।
तखन हरि मन एहन भए गेल करिअ हर ज्वर लोप।

Kṛṣṇa too replies with similar action:

तखन सिरजल शौरि निजज्वर, हन्त अन्त हुताश।
अपन सबहिक ज्वर निकासल, शैव-ज्वर हत आश॥
निकसि हर ज्वर धाए सविनय, खसल हरिपद आए।
करए लागल बहुत गोचर, नाथ लीअ बचाए॥
सदय भए हरि सूनि विनती, गिरिश ज्वर भर काढि।
तखन माधव भागकए पुनु, देल जग भरि बाँटि॥
हारक सिरजल ज्वर पराभव, सकब के जग आन।
सदय भए हरि मन विचारल देखि रूप भयान॥
सुनह निज ज्वर असह जग भरि सहत के दुअ घाह।
हमर तनुवश अन्त बुझि कहु तखन पर तनु जाह॥
तखन ज्वर हरि तनु समाएल भेल शीतल लोक।....

Thereupon Śiva engages himself into a personal fight with Kṛṣṇa. This was terrible. The Gods trembled at its sight. They request the two to abstain from it. Śiva realises that after all, there was no difference between him and Kṛṣṇa and he says:

सुनह बलि-सुत करब हम नहि आब हरिसँ रङ्ग।
हमहि हरि तनु दूइ जानह, काट के निज अङ्ग!

Though Śiva retires from active help yet Śiva's son Kārttikeya comes to Bāṇāsura and is drawn away from the battle only when Gaurī

intervenes. Then Bāṇāsūra realises the might of Kṛṣṇa and accepts his defeat. Kṛṣṇa pardons him and he goes away.

In the second part of the play Bāṇāsura is seen worshiping Śiva. In a Maheśavāṇī he represents his fallen condition to Śiva and prays to him :

शिव मोर करिअ तराने ।
असह व्यथा हम सहए न पारिअ संकट पड़ल पराने ॥
नाचि काछि शिव तोहि रिझाओल आब होएत बरदाने ॥
तखन मेलहुँ मायावश अभिमत याचल आनक आने ॥
तकर उचित फल आए तुलाएल जेहन कएल अभिमाने ॥
दश शत बाहु चयाहिँ काटल गेल नहि दोषी खगवाने ॥
सभ तेजि धाए आए तुअ परिहर-धए मन आस बिधाने ॥
देखिअ नाच हरषि हर हेरिअ हरिअ दोष-सन्ताने ॥
देखि नाच हर सभ दुख फेरल कएल गणक परधाने ॥
रत्नपाणि भन बरद एक शिव जगत विदित यश गाने ॥

On the other hand, the Queen of Bāṇāsura and his Dewan all pray to Kṛṣṇa. He consoles them and arranges the formal marriage of the couple—Aniruddha and Uṣā. The marriage is celebrated in the Maithila manner. At the end of it Nārada makes his appearance to advise Kṛṣṇa for further action.

In the third part, Kṛṣṇa grants general amnesty and restores the kingdom to Bāṇāsura's people. Samodā and Rāmā, two friends of Uṣā, come and sing devotional songs in his praise. He agrees to take them along with Uṣā to Dvārika.

In the fourth part, Kṛṣṇa and his party arrive at Dvārika. Every one is happy to welcome him back after a long absence :

कथाँ-कथिँ सुनल सभ लोक । भेल कृतारथ बिसरल शोक ॥
तखन तैआरी नगर क भेल । दोसर द्वारका बनि बनि गेल ॥
चन्दन चर्च्चित जगमग शरीर । कुसुम बिभूषित भए गेल बरीर ॥
ध्वज पताका सभ दिश शोभ । देखइत सुरपतिकाँ होअ लोभ ॥

कि कहब कारक तखनुक चरित । विश्वकर्म्मा बनि विरचल त्वरित ॥
सब दिशा बाब सकल जन तखन। कृष्ण-कमल-मुख देखब कखन ॥
गजरथ बाजि पदाति अशेष । हरब वे आपित चलल अशेष ॥

Uṣa and Aniruddha are also cheered and the remaining rites of marriage are performed.

The *Uṣáharana* of Ratnapāṇi is a well-written play and represents the story from *Harivaṃsa* (chapters 115-128) faithfully. Of course, he makes suitable variations to give the scenes realistic colour. Its distinguishing characteristics are its elevated style and its lyrical and descriptive passages. The tragic character of Bāṇāsura's fate, and the divine achievements of Kṛṣṇa are successfully brought out. While it is elaborate in certain parts, it has no redundant or stilted passages. The emotion is aroused by appropriate variation from song (गीत) to long passages in verse, from Sanskrit dialogue to Sanskrit song. There is no scope for the witty or humorous role of a Narada, but we do have in him an important link between the different parties and an adviser of Kṛṣṇa.

One peculiar feature of this drama is the speeches of the 'तटस्थ' (the disinterested observer) who reports the progress of the action at various places. It appears that in addition to the proper actors there were some people (not properly called actors) who used to assist in the performance of the play in a manner similar to that of the Greek Chorus.

15. *Bhánunátha Jha*

Beside such a successful and scholarly playwright as Ratnapāṇi, Bhānunātha Jha *alias* Bhānā Jhā appears to be a second-rate dramatist.

Bhānunātha Jha belonged to the family of Khauāla[65]. He was the son of MM. Dīnaban-

65. Badarinatha Jha, *op. cit.* the family tree, and see also SINGH p. 127 and प्रभावतीहरण p. 3,

dhu Jhā (*alias* Nandana Jha or Nemana Jhā) and the elder brother of the famous Naiyāyika MM.. Babujana Jhā. His father obtained a village in Nepal from its ruler as a prize for his scholarship in 1754. He was himself a reputed Jyotiṣī at the court of Mahārāja Maheśvarasiṁha (1850 1860). His only extant drama, *Prabhávatiharana*[69], was written under his patronage. He continued to be connected with the Maithila Court up to the reign of Mahārāja Lakṣmīśvarasiṁha (1880-1898).

The *Prabhávatiharaṇa* is a 'regular' play in four Acts, has light Śṛṅgāra and deals with forceful abduction, fight etc. and may be classed in the Ihāmṛga class of dramas. The story depicts the union of Prabhāvatī, daughter of a demon of Vajrapura, with Kṛṣṇa's son Pradyumna. There is no skill displayed in the management of the plot. The Paripārśva (assistant of the Sutradhāra) acts like the 'Taṭastha' of Ratnapāṇi. He comments upon the passage of time and the change of place. Some farcical humour is provided in the second Act by the introduction of a Jyotiṣī. It is curious that Bhānunātha should not have left even his own profession from the scope of his wit. Some of the charm of the play lies in its songs which are directly imitations of Vidyāpati's songs. For example, the following songs are popular for this reason :

(1) माधव सुनिअ वचन परमाने ।
सुपुरुष जानि शरण अवलम्बँल निज अभिमत दिअ दाने । Etc.

(2) यदुपति सुनिअ विचारी । अभिनव विरह बेआकुलि नारी ॥
नलिन शयन नहि भावे । वनिपथ हेरइत दिवस गमावे ॥ Etc.

69. The play has been printed and published by the Raj Press, Darbhanga. MSS of the songs are known to be with Batahu Jha, Pilakhavāda, P. O. Madhubani, Dist. Darbhanga ; Giridhara Jha Village etc. ibid ; and with Narendranathadasa Village etc, as above.

(3) चलल शयन पहु मनमथ रे नागरि कर लागी ।
जलद बिजुलि जनि बिचलल रे निज निज तनुभागी ॥ Etc.

On the whole, this play is to be ranked with Rāmadāsa's *alias* 'Sarasa-rāma' Kavi's *Ānandavijayanatika*. It is not by any means to be considered as a great drama.

16. *Harsanátha Jha*

Born in 1847 Harṣanātha Jha died only when he was fifty-one years old. He was the son of Vrajanātha Jhā and Śilavatī Devī. He was a native of Śaradāpura Tola of village Ujāna. At the age of fifteen he began his studies and by 1868 finished them at the feet of one Gopāla Thākura. He then went to Benares. He studied there under expert scholars like Rājārāma Śāstrī, Bāla Śastri and Nṛsiṁha Śastrī. He came back to his home in 1871 and obtained a place in the court of Mahārāja Lakṣmīśvara-siṁha (1880-1898). He passed the rest of his life in his service.

He was the author of several Sanskrit and Maithili works. Of these, the *Usáharana* and the *Mádhavánanda* are 'regular' Maithilī dramas and the *Rádhákrsnamilanalílá* (or *Siddhásrama-lílá*) was originally a long līlā in Maithilī but later on it was translated into Hindi (Braja-bhāṣā) for Rāsadhārīs of Braja.

The story of *Usáharana*[70] is the same as that of Ratnapāṇi's *Usáharana*. It is divided into

70. Printed twice (i) edited by Canda Jha, Union Press, Darbhanga, 1887, (ii) edited by the poet's son Riddhinatha Jha, and Dr. Amaranatha Jha, *Harsanatha Kavyagranthavali* Indian Press, Allahabad. Three more MSS are available; (a) with Umesha Mishra, Village, Cataria, P. O. Darbhanga, (b) with Chandraśekhara Mishra Village. Damodarapur, P. O. Benipatti, Dist. Darbhanga, and with (c) Yadunandana Thakura, Village. Sarvasima. P. O. Jhanjharapur, Dist. Darbhanga.

five Acts. The first Act describes Uṣā's obtaining of the boon for getting her beloved from Gaurī. In the second Act Bāṇāsura is shown to have obtained the boon that his itch to fight a suitable adversary would be satisfied. Citralekhā then draws the portrait of Aniruddha and goes to bring him to Uṣā. She does not take the help of Nārada as in Ratnapāṇi's *Usāharana*. The third Act describes the secret union of the hero, Aniruddha, with the heroine, Uṣā. Unlike Ratnapāṇi, Harṣanātha utilises this situation to indulge in several erotic songs. Almost all dialogues are carried on in this Act in Maithili songs. In one of these, the morning is described in an excellent image:

धीवर अइ मयङ्क तरणि चढ़ि शशिकर जाल पसार।

उडुगन मीन बझाए चलल जनि गगन पयोनिधि पार॥

The mark in the face of the moon is supposed in the above lines to represent a fisherman who has thrown the net of moonbeams from the moon-boat in the sea of sky. And as morning approaches the stars and the planets are imagined to have been taken out of the net as the fish caught in the net are taken out by the fisherman. It is a unique image in Maithili Literature and speaks highly of Harṣanātha's imaginative powers.

In the fourth Act Bāṇāsura learns from his servants of Aniruddha's entry into Uṣā's palace. He orders his arrest. But by praying to Śakti, Aniruddha finds himself free from all traps into which Bāṇāsura's men put him. Nevertheless, he is ultimately confined to the prison.

In the last Act the fight between Kṛṣṇa and Bāṇāsura is given. Bāṇāsura calls upon Fever to break the morale and the strength of Kṛṣṇa's arms. Fever is vividly imagined:

जाति उनमत भयङ्कर वेश। रोग राज ज्वर देल परवेश॥

तीनि चरण तिनि मुख विकराल, नवलोचन कयो बाहुविशाल॥

नयन निमीलित आलसें पाए हाथ जरम अनुखन हाफिआए ॥
चौदिश झुकिझुकि करए पयान, जाहि परतख ताहि हरए पराने ॥

Fever is described as extremely uneasy, terrible in appearance, three-faced, nine-eyed and six-armed, with eyes closed with lethargy, with hands burning, every moment yawning, and eating on every sides every body whom he happens to see.

The battle is very briefly described. Kṛṣṇa wins it and brings back Uṣā and Aniruddha.

On the whole, Harṣanātha's play is not equal to Ratnapāṇi's. Not only has Ratnapāṇi a wider canvas, but his homely style, tender harmony and skilful narrative powers make his play supremely successful.

The *Mádhavánanda*[71] was written under the patronage of Babu Ekaradeśvarasiṁha, grandson of Mahārāja Rudrasiṁha. It is also a 'regular' Maithilī drama. It is an imaginary reconstruction of Kṛṣṇa's sports with the Gopīs on the basis of Rasapañcādhyāyī of the *Śrimadbhágavata*. The subject-matter is very much similar to the third Act of Nandīpati's, *Kṛṣṇakelimálá*. Harṣanātha's treatment is however, much more elevated and graceful. His descriptions are ornate and picturesque, his songs more exuberant and lyrical and his imagination vivid and colourful. He borrows his images from Sanskrit tradition, but sometimes he shows remarkable originality. For example, in a comparison of the beloved kissing the lover, the poet says:

जनि पङ्कज चलन करि सजनी चन्दुबीच पिब चन्द ॥

and in that of the drops of perspiration on her face:

71. Published by Dr. Amaranatha Jha. in *Harṣanáthakávyagranthávalī*.

पुलक सोभिनिकर बनि वरुनी कलधर शशि अवतारि ॥

One of the songs of Haṣanatha is quoted below to illustrate his poetic qualities as displayed in this play :

कि कहब अपरुब नागरि रूपे ।
नीलवसनि घनि जलदवलित जनि थिर रहु तड़ित स्वरूपे ॥
राजित वदन मनोहर तापर कुन्तल कुटिल विराजे ।
राहु दशन डर तिमिर नुकाएल जनि रजनीकर राजे ॥
चललि रोमावलि भुजगि नाभिबिल लोचन खञ्जन त्रासे ।
कुचकञ्चनगिरिनिकट नुकाइलि नागगरुड़ तरासे ॥
नूपुर पद्मरागपदशिञ्जित ललितनटम श्रुति कञ्जे ।
नयनभेद कइ पुलक अङ्कुमइ कनक विशेषक पुञ्जे ॥
तञ्जु तनुरचल मदन जनि रसमयकी रसलम्पट ठाने ।
जपतपनिरत सतत रसवञ्चितकी बिह रचल अयाने ॥
सुन्दर अधरसुधरिमद गञ्जबकटि केहरि अभिमाने ।
एकरदेश्वरसिंह बुझथि रस हर्षनाथ कवि भाने ॥ ६ ॥

Harṣanātha is a lover of Nature. In *Usáharana* he paints winter as a businessman :

उतरल जगभरि शिशिरपसार, बसल तरुब ऋतुपति बनिजार ।
पसरल सओदा मधुरस फूल, अभिनव सौरभ प्रेम अमूल ।
तौलत दखिन पवन विचारि, भमि भमि माँगत भ्रमर भिखारि ।
पिक कुल करत दलालक काज, गाहक तरुणी तरुण समाज ।
हसित वचन लोचन दय दाम, किनत सिनेह रतन सब ठाम ।
रसमय हर्षनाथ कवि भान, नृप लक्ष्मीश्वरसिंह रस जान ॥२॥

In the *Mádhavánanda* he paints Śarada in erotic images such as : (a) the Sun has left his abode and Moon entered it as if he were the second husband : (तेजि ककुभ कामिनि निज दिनमणि अस्तशिखर चल गेला । निरखि सून घर जनि रजनीकर उपपति उपगत भेला ।), (b) the river uncovers itself as the young damsel uncovers herself with great hesitation : (निर्मल सरित शरदसमयोचित क्रमिक पुलिन दरशावे । जाब अधीन नवीन युवति जनि लजु लजु जघन देखावे ॥).

Harsanatha is the last great Kırtaniya dramatist. He carried on the traditions of

Maithili drama as faithfully as he could, to the present day. But the end of the Kīrtaniyā drama was in sight and Harṣanātha only represents the last glow of it.

17. *Viśvanātha Jha*

Some dramatists, however, followed Harṣanātha Jha, though their works show that the life had gone out of them. Viśvanātha Jha *alias* Bālājī of Navaṭola introduces us to the present century. He finished his work, *Rameśvaracandrikā*, in Hindi in 1899-1900 and died in the first decade of the twentieth century. He was great-grandson of Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha's daughter. He belonged to the group of New Maithilī scholars: Kṛṣṇaji (= Cetanātha Jhā), Harṣanātha Jhā, Canda Jhā etc. at the court of Mahārāja Lakṣmīśvarasiṁha (1880—1898).

His play was not fully known to us till recently. It is 'irregular' Maithilī play. It contains songs alone. Its name is not clear at all.[72] It begins with usual benediction to Gosāuni in imitation of Vidyāpati's famous pada :

जै जै असुर सकल कुल नाशिनि • आदिसनातिनि माया ।
गिरिवर वासिनि शंकर वासिनि • निज जन पर करु दाया । Etc.

Then the entrance of Bṛkhabhānu(u) Kumari (Radhā) Kṛṣṇa's beloved, is announced. She engages herself in a 'Rāsa-līlā' with Kṛṣṇa. Then, follows a series of 'Viraha' (separation) songs many of which echo Vidyāpati again. For example :

तरुण वैस सखि पहु रहु दूरे • कन २ तनि बिन होअ तनु झूरे ।
उदधि सुता सुत तसु यमहारे • लागत मोहि कुलिस समराजे ॥ सखी हे

72. MS in the poet's own hand with Narendranathadasa, Village etc. as above. He lent it to me.

मलयज लेपन पावक अङ्गे • सभक उचित फल गेल हरि सङ्गे ।
बसनें विचित्र भाव मोहि कैसे • लाला मृग रिपु लागे वैसे ॥
विश्वनाथ धनि धैरज लाई • नृपलक्ष्मीश्वर विह रूप पाई ॥ १२ ॥

Finally the union of Kṛṣṇa and his beloved is celebrated with all the paraphernalia of taking her to Kṛṣṇa's room and the first moments of Māna where Kṛṣṇa tries to please her by paying earnest compliments to her beauty. In one of these Māna songs, Kṛṣṇa recalls the season too which ought to make her break her Māna :

रमनी सहज समय नहि मान   रितुपति निज दल सकल सङ्गे
आएल केलिक काम ।
कमल कुसुम(I)कर राज गादि सुभटे रत सुक गजनाम ॥
किंशुक सीमर दुन्दुरावद ! उ सावल सुभग निशान ।

The entire play is a very slendar piece and is really a series of songs rather than a 'play' properly so called. There are no stage-directions and indications for speeches by different characters are very few. Only, the author ends it by saying 'इति नाटिका समाप्त'.

18. *Candā Jha* (1830—1907)

We shall discuss the life and career of Candā Jhā later. His only known play, *Ahalyā-caritanataka*,[73] was partly published in 1912. The subject is the famous legend of India's illicit connections with Ahalyā, wife of Gautama Ṛṣi, and her redemption by Rāma. Caṇḍā Jha quotes appropriate songs from other poets too, such as, Jayadeva and Vidyāpati.

The scene where Indra is trying to induce Ahalyā to have intercourse with him will illustrate the general style of this play :

73. e. g. *Mihira*, Feb. 17, 1912.

नाराच छन्द

(इन्द्र)—प्रिये अहाँ मनोजबाधा वेदना निवारिणी। करथि दिव्य
कान्ति सौ रतीक गर्वहारिणी।
विना विलम्ब सौं मिलू महा कृतार्थ कारिणी। त्रिलोक मे
रहत तासु विज्ञता प्रचारिणी।

(अहल्या)—प्राणेश सम्प्रति सम्भोगानर्ह वेला।

वेषधारी अहल्याञ्चलक ग्रहण करथि ओ मानावलम्ब करथि

(वेषधारी इन्द्र)—(आउबताले गीयते देशवराडी रागेण)

वदसि यदि कि ञ्चिदपिदन्त रुचिकौमुदी Etc ...जयति
जयदेव कवि भारती भूषितं मानिनी प्रान जनितशातम् ॥

तिरहुति

मानिनि मन आबहु कए ओर।
रजनि बहलि हे रहलि अछि थोड़ ॥
गुनमति भए गुन न धरिय गोय।
सुपुरुष दाने आधिक फल होय ॥
वेरा एक हेरह हर ओ मन ताप।
प्रेमलता तोड़ लए बड़ पाप ॥
लोचन भमर हमर करु आश।
तुअ मुख पङ्कज कर ओ विलास ॥

(अहल्या) –(विद्यापतिः) "हठे न हलिअ मोर भुजयुगजाति।
भागि जाएत विश किशलय काँति ॥
हटिय हटिय निअनवन चकोर।
पीबि जाएत धसि शशि मुखचोर ॥
परछित हलिअ पयोधर गोर।
भागि जाएत गिरि कनक कटोर ॥
अधरा किरण किछु अम्बर मेल।
दीपक शिखा मलिन भय गेल ॥
हठ तेजु माधव जयवा देह।
राखय चाहिय गुपुत सिनेह ॥
दुरजने जाएत परिजन कान।
सजन चतुर-मन होयत मलान ॥

भमरै कुसुम रमि गरइ अघोरि ।
केओन चेकत करब निज चोरि ॥
अपने ओ घन है धनिक घर गोप ।
पकर तन पर गढ कर कोप ॥
फार चोरिओ चेतन चोर ।
जागि आयत पुर परिजन मोर ॥
भनइ विद्यापति कवि कहसार ।
से जीवन जेपर उपकार ॥

19. *Baladeva Mishra* (born c. 1887)

Baladeva Mishra is the last living author of this tradition. He belongs to village Haripura and is the present Rāja Paṇḍita of the Darbhanga Rāj He wrote two plays, *Rájarájesvarinátaka* (1920) and *Ramesodayanátaka*, under the patronage of the late Mahārājadhirāja Rameśvarasiṁha (1898-1929).

The *Rájarájesvarinataka* [74] is a long work divided into nine Acts. It relates the story of the birth of Kumāra on the basis of the Kāśikhaṇḍa of *Skandapuráṇa*. Its exciting scenes are those which show the penance of Pārvatī and those which depict the killing of the demon Tāḍakā. Its performance interspersed with farces such as 'Kuladevatā-Praṇāma', 'Anuṣṭhāna', 'Curing snake-bite by Mantras' etc. and, therefore, used to take three days to be staged.

The play begins with a picture, sordid and cruel, of the administration of Tāḍakā. The gods go to Bhuvaneśvarīdevī at Maṇidvīpa to secure her help against him. The Maṇidvīpa is vividly described and the goddess is shown to agree to take birth as Pārvatī.

74. I have been told about this play in detailed by the author himself. The manuscript is with the Kīrtaniyā party which performed it.

When Paravati is born the Pamarigs celebrate her appearance on this earth. Narada comes and declares that Parvati should take to penance. She offers prayers to Śiva and the story progresses along the lines of Kalidasa's *Kumārasambhava*. The Maheśavāṇiś of Vidyapati and Canda Jha are quoted profusely in this connection.

When Śiva has accepted Gauri as his wife, the marriage is celebrated in the Maithila manner. Kumāra Skanda is born after the couple are shown to have enjoyed their married life. Skanda grows to be the commander of the armies of the gods and succeeds in defeating the demon Tāḍakā.

In the hour of victory all rejoice. Śiva dances with joy and the gods themselves partake in the 'Pradoṣa' song. The audience are also known to have participated in this last song.

CONCLUSION

The Kirtaniya is practically dead today. New plays are hardly ever written; all that is extant is the revival of old successful plays. With the advent of new forces a new drama has been born. We shall have occasion to discuss it elsewhere.

The Kirtaniya was primarily a poetic drama and its chief attractions lay in its poetic and musical features. There was little or no deftness in plot construction or characterization. It had some elements of humour—especially in the form of Narada and Śiva—and some passages in praise of the Lord, either as Kṛṣṇa, Śiva or Śakti, and its basis of teaching morality and culture to the spectators was essentially Pauranic. The most popular themes were the abduction of Rukmiṇī, of the Parijata, of Uṣā and the marriage of Gauri and Śiva. The

dramas on Śiva were more popular in later years and were in the line of Śaṅkara Miśra's *Gītagaurīdigambara* and of Vaṁśamaṇi Jha's play on Śiva.

The structure of the Kīrtaniyā drama is generally of two kinds. Those which use Sanskrit and Prākṛta dialogues and verses and generally stick to the structure of the Sanskrit drama, such as, Rāmadāsa's *Ānandavijaya*, Umāpati's *Pārijātaharaṇa*, Bhānunātha's *Prabhāvatīharaṇa* and Harṣanātha's *Uṣāharaṇa*. They are different from those which are more or less free from Sanskrit and are made up of vernacular songs only, such as, Nandīpati's *Śrīkṛṣṇakelimālā*, Śivadatta's *Gaurīpariṇaya*, and Lāla Kavi's and Kānhārāmadāsa's *Gaurīsvayaṁvaras* In the latter class we have generally in the beginning a maṅgala song, sometimes called Nāndī, and a song describing the characters who are to act in the play. We have then individual entrance songs, songs of dialogue, descriptive songs and narrative songs. There are sometimes verses ('chandas' and 'Dohās') which relieve the monotony of continuous singing of songs. There are some plays where both types of Kīrtaniyā drama are mixed, for example, Ratnapāṇi's *Uṣāharaṇa*.

The broad impression left upon the readers of the two types of plays is that the former was presented to the court where a cultured and scholarly audience witnessed its performance, while the latter was meant for the people in general. That is why the first is sophisticated and formal, whereas the latter is more natural, easy, intelligible, simple, direct and informal.

The songs were usually composed by the play-wright himself, but in the later Kīrtaniyā plays the authors allowed the actors to introduce suitable songs from other writers as well.

Almost all of these dramatists tried to cast their stories in Maithila mould. They intro-

duced Maithila beliefs, Maithila customs and Maithila ceremonies and rites. In spite of a certain anachronism, this tendency to let the audience appreciate fully the stories in a way familiar to it, contributed not a little to the success of these plays.

The Kırtaniyā drama of Mithila is one of the glorious achievements of Maithila Literature. It simplified the Vidyāpati tradition of writing poems, it contributed to the growth of long narrative poems in Maithilī, it kept generations of Maithilī writers engaged in a profitable task and finally it contributed to the popularity and development of Maithilī language and literature during the centuries.

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CHAPTER IX

MAITHILI DRAMA IN ASSAM

INTRODUCTORY—ITS ORIGIN

Thanks to the efforts of Assamese scholars we can now fairly reconstruct the growth and development of Maithili dramas in Assam in a systematic manner. The rise of the Ahom power in the Province by the end of the 15th Cen. was remarkable. The Ahoms on many occasions successfully repelled the Musalman attacks and maintained internal tranquillity. As a result of these disturbances, however, as Mr. Birinchi Kumar Barua in his brochure on *Assamese Literature* observes,[1] the Kingdom of Kāmarupa was split up into numerous petty principalities and a new line of kings known as the Koches rose to power under Vishva Singha (c. 1515 A.D.). Soon after his accession, Vishva Singha removed the capital to Cooch-Behar. We know from the Rajmālā[2] how intimate was the connection of Mithila and Cooch-Behar in the following years.

Now, under the son of Vishva Singh, Naranārāyaṇa who ascended the throne on the death of his father in 1540, learning and culture flourished greatly in Assam. All the great poets and scholars of the time are known to have visited his court. At this very time,

1. Published by Indian Centre of the P. E. N., Bombay, p. 16.

2. N. N. Vasu, *Hindi Viśva-Koṣa*.

the Great Vaiṣṇava Movement of which some Assamese scholars have found roots in Early Kāmarupa,[3] and which came in as a revolt against "the cold intellectualism of Brahmanic Philosophy and the lifeless formalism of mere ceremonial,"[4] penetrated and swept away all other faiths such as Śāktism. Śaṅkara Deva was instrumental in propounding the cult of Bhakti or devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the one God above all gods, by producing a huge popular literature in the Vernacular.[5]

The Assamese devotees took to drama as the most effective and easy means of influencing the public. It is till this day customary, therefore, for the Vaiṣṇava Satrādhikāras of the Assamese monasteries to give token of their learning and zeal by first composing a drama before they are formally ordained as pontiffs.[6] Consequently, there grew up in course of time a large dramatic literature in Assam.

In the 16th century they adopted Maithili as the medium of these Vaiṣṇava dramas. It has been suggested that they did so because during the course of his piligrimages the great leader of the movement Śaṅkara Deva, had seen Vidyāpati's successful handling of his mother tongue.[7] Others suggest that the

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3. JKAMRUPA, Vol. III

4. See and compare *e.g.* the theme of Śaṅkaradeva's play *Patnīprasāda*, described below.

5. B. K. Barua, *Assamese Literature*, p. 17.

6. Historical Introduction to *Aṅkīā Nāṭ*, edited by B. K. Barua and published by Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Government of Assam, Assam p. 24.

7. Mr. Barua, *Assamese Literature*, p. 21 says: "It is difficult to guess why Śaṅkaradeva should have chosen this language as a medium of dramatic expression. He had written many books in pure Assamese verse. His sudden departure into this language seems to be an enigma.

adoption of Maithili added sanctity to the characters [8] but this view cannot be seriously entertained because as we have seen above Vidyāpati never intended to make his mother tongue the vehicle of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa worship. Of course, in Bengal and elsewhere Maithili had been adopted as such and it is possible that Śaṅkara Deva was influenced by the sanctity of Maithili in Bengal. Elsewhere, Mr. Barua rightly says:

> "Was it because it had in it both the elements of dignity and general intelligibility? Here also he was influenced by the classical tradition. In Sanskrit plays it was customary for the chief actors to speak in Sanskrit and minor and female characters spoke in Magadhi or Sauraseni Prakrit The same thing featured in the earliest miracle plays of the 12th century, where French and Latin were the language of the chief actors and the English of the minor and the comic ones. Sankaradeva did a great thing, he followed the middle course; the whole of his drama was given in a mixed language. Maithili—mixed Assamese whereby the dignity of his character was preserved. Perhaps more than this lies behind his choice. Sanskrit ceased to be a popular language as early as the first century after Christ. By the 12th Century A. D. the gulf between the popular speeches and the native languages was feeling its way as it were for a foot-hold. Every progressive change in religion or civilization is possible only through a gigantic movement of dynamic force. The neo-Vaisnavic religious revival of Northern India was such a movement; it swept everything before it like a flood and in the replenished soil it left behind the struggling native languages at once took root and flourished. At first a common language was formed at Mithila, the great centre

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Was his choice of Maithili possibly influenced by his reading of Vidyapati's works............or more probably by his witnessing Maithili performances when he was in Ayodhya (?) in the hey-day of Vidyapati's fame?" Also see introduction to *Aṅkīā Nāṭ* p. 5.

8. *Aṅkīā Nāṭ* Intr. p. 25. Most of the quotations in this chapter are from this Introduction.

(?) of this neo-Vaisnavism. Maithili, the languages of Mithila, soon became the language of a definite literature. Through his emotional and lyrical songs, Vidyapati............made the language an eminently suitable and exclusive vehicle of expression for the Vaisnava poets of his time....... Eminent poets, scholars, preachers, from different parts of India thronged round (?) him. They came from Nepal; Kāmarūp was not behind. Enough literary and historical evidence (?) remain to show that scholars from Kāmarup also visited Mithila .. and learnt the language."[9]

In fine, Maithili plays were written in abundance in Assam in an age when printing was unknown because by their spectacular appeal to the people the leaders of the neo-Vaisnavites could popularise their faith and at the same time preserve a literary flavour and perhaps a supposed sanctity of a dignified, chaste and sweet medium.

The background of these dramas was the recitation of Kāvyas. As Mr. Barua, says: At first the Assamese Vaisnava leaders adopted the method of teaching and explaining the doctrinal truths of their religion through performances where stories from the epics and the *Bhágavata Purána* were illustrated by a series of pictures, in which the performers probably acted in dumb-show. Gradually they began to represent scenes from the life of Krsna the one-God of worship of the Vaisnavas or stories from the *Rámáyana* and the *Mahábhárata.*

The Leading Dramatists[10]

1. *Sankaradeva*

Śankara-deva (1449-1558) the earliest and perhaps the greatest of the dramatists, wrote

9. *Ankia Nāt* Intro. p. 5-6.

10. Much useful information regarding the *Ankia Nāt* was available in the History of Assamese Literature, Cat,

many Maithili dramas, of which only six are extant. There is no certainty regarding their chronology but they have been recently printed in the following order: *Káliya-damana*, *Ráma-Vijaya* (or *Sítá-Svayambara*), *Rukminí Harana*, *Keli-Gopála*, *Patní-Prasáda*, *Párijáta-Harana*. These represent the best and the longest Maithili dramas in Assam.

The *Káliya Damana* was composed at the request of his brother Rāmarāya. Its theme is the most popular one in Bengali yātrās. It deals with the story of Kṛṣṇa subjugating the Kāli-Nāga. The following extract where the wives of the Snake implore the Lord's forgiveness, will serve as a specimen (the Sutradhāra alone recites throughout the play—suggesting its early character when Śankaradeva had not outgrown the Kāvya type of recitation):

सूत्र—तदन्तर नागवधू सबक परम सन्ताप पेखिये श्रीकृष्णक कृपा उपजल। नागनारी सबक सम्बोधि बोलल। आये कालिक भार्या नागिनी सब, सन्ताप चोरह। इहि बोलि डेव दिया नामि सर्पंक फणाहन्ते अन्तर हुया रहल।

श्लोक

ततो पूच्छितः कालियः शनैः सम्प्राप्य चेतनाम्।
कृतोच शिरसा नत्वा मत्वा कृष्णमहेश्वरम्।

सूत्र—यमपुर पाइ कालि कथञ्चमपि प्राण वर्त्तल। महापीड़ा पाइ फोकारत आपद औषदि पाइ सर्प दर्प भेल। चित्त शान्त हुया आंखि मेलि कृष्णक आगु पेखि बोलल। ओहि कोटि ब्रह्मान्तेश्वरनारायण जानि, आहि आहि स्वामि कृष्ण बोलि शिरे चरण परशिये प्रणाम करल। पश्चात् आनु पारिकार बोरि (जोरि) तुति (स्तुति) आरम्भल।

पयार

जय जय जगत महेश्वर। ब्रह्मा शङ्कर याहे किङ्कर॥
जय भकतक भयहारी। नमो हरि चरण तोहारि॥
तब पारे (पाएरे) अतये ताधि। मवि पापी अपराधी॥ Etc.[11]

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of Assamese MSS (edited by Goswmi), the Ankia Nat and from my friend Prof. P. Goswami, Gauhati College, Gauhati.

11. Pp. 15-16.

The *Ráma-vijaya* is rather unhappily named in that it is not any conquest of Rāma, or even by Rāma, that it strictly deals with : It depicts the episode of Sitā's svayaṁvara. It was composed at the request of Prince Śukladhvaja or Cilarāya, the brother of Naranārāyaṇa (Śaṅkaradeva's patron). This is what Sitā is supposed to think when Rāma rises to take up Śiva's bow :

सूत्र—हे सामाजिक। बेखन रामचन्द्र अजगव धनू धरल, सीता शङ्कित भावे चिन्तित भेलि।

सीता—हा हा हामार स्वामी परम सुकुमार नवीन बयस। वज्राधिक कठिन महेशक धनु. इहात गुण दिते स्वामी जानो नहि पारब। हा हा पिता कि दारुण कर्म्म कयलि। (ओहि चिन्ति पृथ्वीक कातर कय बोलल। (हे मा॰ वसुमति तुहु थिर हुआ रहब। हे पिता अनन्त! तुहु भाल कबे पृथिवी धरब। हे शङ्कर कूर्म्मराज, तुहु अनन्त पृथ्वीक सकहुँ धरब। तोरा सबक प्रसादे स्वामी यदि धनुत गुण दिते पारब, तब आमि अगति रगति हवे। ओहि बुलि सीता स्वामी क समुखि निरिखि रहल।) श्लोक—

As Mr. Ambikanath Borah pointed out the *Rukmini Harana Náta* is the most popular of Maithili Vaiṣṇava dramas in Assam.

> "The Romance of Rukmiṇı is a national theme, as she was the daughter of King Bhiṣmak, who figures in Assamese traditions as the ruler of Kuṇḍil or Sadiya. Śankaradeva, with subtle and intuitive knowledge of realities, exploited the vast potentiality of the theme of Rukmiṇı in imparting the flavour of nationalism to the exotic materials of Vaisnava propaganda. The same story has been handled by him in a narrative master piece, entitled Rukmiṇī-harana which is Assamese to its very core.[12]"

It is the longest of all dramas printed so far. The story is well-known and it is remarkable how the central pivot of the drama, Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇı in love with each other is hurriedly passed over and no place is given to baser sentiments.

12. Cal. Rev 1933 June; reprinted in *Aṅkiā Nāṭ* Intr., p. 25.

The *Keli-Gopála* deals with the amours (Rāsa-Līlā) of Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs, the source being the tenth canto of the Bhagavata. This is how Kṛṣṇa handles Rādhā when she becomes proud:

सूत्र—स्वभावे चञ्चल स्त्री लाइ पाइ ईश्वर कृष्णक गर्भ्वे नाहि, शुनि श्रीकृष्ण कटाक्षे बोल।

श्रीकृष्ण—हे प्राण राधे। ···यदि चलये नाहि पार हामार कान्धे चढ़िब।

सूत्र—गोपी कटाक्ष नाहि बूझल। वल काढ़ि कान्हे चरिते रङ्गे चलल। ताहे पेखि कृष्ण अन्तर्ध्यान होइ पलावल (पलाएल)।

श्रीराधा—से गर्व्वे अन्ध भैलो; कृष्ण कान्ध चढ़ाइते गेलो। से अपराधे बहुवल्लभ श्रीकृष्ण हामाक छाड़ि कोन भिति गेल, इहा नाहि जानो (क्रन्दन)[13]

The *Párijáta-Harana*, of Sankara Deva is in different spirit from the *Párijáta-Harana* of Umāpati. The part of Nārada is ably managed, though he has not the humour of Umāpati's play. The interest of the playwright in making Kṛṣṇa run to Prāgjotiṣa at the request of the gods to rescue them from the hands of Narakāsura, the king of Kāmarūpa of Assam, and in making Satyabhāmā the wronged queen accompany him so as to press him for the Pārijāta as they are coming back, is evidently from motives of adding something for the country of the spectators. The part of Śacī is unknown in the work of Umāpati. There are various other points of difference between the two plays especially in the conclusion. All emphasis in Śankar Deva's treatment of the theme is on showing a glorious achievement of the Lord for the sake of his devoted gopī; and in Umāpati's play the emphasis is on showing an enjoyable quarrel and 'māna' between Kṛṣṇa as a husband and Satyabhāmā as a co-wife. There is no doubt that the latter is very

13. Pp. 17-18

much more successful work than the former but it has its own place and, in its own way, it is one of the best plays in pure Maithili at such an early period.

The *Patnī-Prasāda* does not seem to be based on any earlier story.

> "The theme of the play is the devotion of the wife of the Brahmans to Krishna, even contrary to the wishes of their husbands; it illustrates the futility of sacrifices for attaining the highest bliss.....Being pleased with them, Krishna helped the ladies to have a sight of the gods—a privilege which the Brahmans acquired only by religious rites. This drama illustrates the doctrinal idea that devotion alone leads to communion with God, not sacrifices and incantations."[14]

The first extract below tells us what the gopa-boys (friends of Kṛṣṇa) say to the Brāhmaṇas, and the subsequent hue and cry at their wives going away to offer food to Kṛṣṇa[15]

सूत्र – ऐचन परकारे ब्राह्मणीसब श्रीकृष्णाक देखिते चलल । सोहि समये ब्राह्मण सब येचे निषेधल, ता देखह । हे ब्राह्मणी सब, तोरा सबे कि देखल, कि शुनल ! यज्ञ कार्य परिहरि गोवालक पाछू पाछू कतिहो याव् ! हाहा तोरा सब भ्रन्ता मेलि । (परन्तु) "हरि भक्ति रसे आकुल हया तारा सबे शुने नाहि । सोहि समये एक ब्राह्मण ब्राह्मणी गृह मध्ये आचय जानि द्वारबन्द कए राखल । तदन्तर कृष्ण दरशन आशा भङ्ग ब्राह्मणी कृष्ण चरण हृदये धरिये येचे प्राण तेजल, ताहे देखह शुनह । निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि ।

(*b*) This is how Kṛṣṇa shows the gods to the wives of the Brahmanas:

श्रीकृष्ण देवता सबक आनिये प्रत्यक्ष देखावल । देवतासब बोल, हे ब्राह्मणीसब तोरासबक कोनबनि असूया असूया करबे नाहि हामो देवतासब जाना । ओहि बुलिदेवतासब अन्तर्धान भेला[15A] ।

2. *Mádhavadeva*

After Śankaradeva, Mādhavadeva (1489-1596) the chief disciple of the leader, rose to

14. Aṅkīā Nāṭ Int., p. 17.
15. Pp. 5, 7.
15A. P. 11.

the apostolic gaddi. His highest achievements in poetry are said to be *Námaghosa* and *Bhakti Ratnávalí* both being works of Vaiṣṇava philosophy (the latter being translation of Tairabhukta Viṣṇupuri's famous work). His extant dramas are *Arjuna-bhanjana*, *Bhojana-vyavahára*, *Bhumiledová*, *Bhusana Herod*, *Rása Jhúmara*, *Kotorá-khelá*, *Goálapárá*, *Oora-dhará*, and *Pimpara-gucuá*. They deal mostly with the pranks of Kṛṣṇa as a child.

The *Arjuna-bhanjana* deals with the attempt of Kṛṣṇa to untie himself from the Ukhari (pounding machine) for stealing away a curd-pot and uprooting two Arjuna trees (which were two cursed sons of Kubera awaiting their liberation). The play is almost entirely in long prose passages. The following quotations will give an idea of the spirit in which the plays of Mādhavadeva were written :

तदन्तरे यशोदा श्रीकृष्णाक उदखले बान्धि थैयकहु गृहकर्म्मे व्यग्र रहल। ताहे देखिये श्री कृष्ण मने गुणये लागल—

श्रीकृष्ण देखो आजु हामु भकतक हाते आपुने बन्दि हम कहु बन्ध जीवक संसार बन्ध चोरब (छोडब)। आपुन बन्धन दूर करते नाहि पारत। इहा जानि सब लोक हामाक परम ईश्वर मानि भकति कय कहो संसार घोर निकार तरब। कुबेरक पुत्र दुहू, एकक नाम नल कुबेर अपरक नाम मणि-ग्रव। दुहू देवता नारदक शापे ओहि यमलार्ज्जुन हुया रहल थिक। नारदक वरदाने ओहि हच जनमते हामाक स्मरण कय थिक। आजु हामु परम भकत नारद क वचन साफलिये दुहुक दुख दूर करब। [16] ......

सूत्र एचन परकारे श्रीकृष्ण गोकुलवासीक रङ्गीये नाना न विनोद करिये रहल थिक। हे लोक, देखू देखू परम इश्वर पुरुषोत्तम त्रिगुण नियन्ता गुणातीत परम देवता जीवक तरण निमित्तं आपुने साचात् वेकत हुया कपट मानुष चेष्टा देखाया विविध लीला विस्तार कयल। इहाक श्रवण, कीर्तन करिये सब लोक सुखे तरब। [17]

16. P. 13.
17. P, 18.

The *Cora-ghara* is very delightful. It describes how Kṛṣṇa imputed the theft to the butter to the gopis themselves :

(a) यशोदा—हे माइ गोवारी। तोहो हामु अभागनीत कि पुछह?
हामु अनेक पुरुष देवताक वरे कृष्णक पुता करलों से मायपुत्र कृष्ण
खेरि खेलाइते विहाने बजावल बियाल मे गेल, एखनो नाहि पारलों।
से प्राण पुत्रक विचारि नपाइ हामारि प्राण केछे रहब।

गोपी—हे माइ यशोदे। तोहेँ ओहि निमित्ते क्रन्दन करह, तोहों ताप तेजह
ताप तेजह। तोहारि बालक हामु देखलों ताहेक बात कहछि। ताशुनह
Etc.

(b)- श्रीकृष्णक आपन हातक लवनु गोपी क मुखे माखिये बोलत। आहे गोपी
सब देखु देखु आवर साक्षीत कम न प्रयोजन; अनिको मुखहि साक्षी। [18]

The *Pimpara gucua* depicts another scene of Kṛṣṇa stealing butter and protesting quickly as only trying to drive away the ants from it : Listen to the rebukes of Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa's retort :

यशोदा—हे पुता। आजु तोहाक शिक्षा देवब गोपालक पारा कमे चन नाहि
याब।

सखी—हे माइ तोहा काहे ऐचन गारि देसि।

श्रीकृष्ण—हे मायि! तुहु बिस्तर नाहि बोलब। हामु तोहारि भर्त्सना
सहब नाहि। कोन चार पुरातन कलस भाकुल कहा(ह) दुइक धन
हानि कवल ताहेक गावे नाहि सहल। आर की सहब! Etc [19]

The *Bhumi-letova* shows Kṛṣṇa besmearing his body as a reply to Yaśoda's neglect in very charming manner :

यशोदा - आहे बालक तुहो किनिमित्ते माटि लोटि क्रन्दन करह—

श्रीकृष्ण - आहे मायि यशोदे, ओहि भावडक मध्ये नवलवनि सेवा छिलों
ताहेक के निवा गेल। ....

यशोदा—आहे पूत, तोहारि बानरे सकल लवनु खावल। तुहु हामात
रोषकरिये। माटि लोटि केठन क्रन्दन करस।
ओहि मालिक प्रतलि शरिर धूलि धूसरित भेल। ..

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18. Pp. 7, 8, 9.

19. Pp. 4, 6.

आः अखने गोपाल तवे दधि आनव। ताहेक हमु बलिवे नविन लवनु देवर। जिनि कर्पूर माखिवे खीरर आहु देखो, तहु ताहेक आनन्दे भोजन करवि। यदि हामार वचने अज्ञात नाहि यावत तवे पराक गोपीं दासी करह।...

—ओहि बेलि यशोदा कृष्णक कोले तत्काले स्तन पान कराइते श्रीकृष्ण यशोदा क चेतन भार परकाश करल ता देखह।

गीत— रागश्याम—परिताल।

यशोदा गोपाल कोले निछे।

वदन भरि घन चुम्बन दिछे। Etc.[20]

Bhojana Vyavahára is a slender play and tries to show how Lord Krṣṇa was outwitted by Brahmā when he was once, along with other cowherd-boys, enjoying his meals, by making the cows and, later on, the fellow cowherds disappear. The play is rather inappropriately named and the episode is left without any indication of the restoration of the cows and the aftermath—of course, as it stands, the name is not wrong.

The *Rása Jhúmara* is a play very much different from others by Mādhavadeva. It is a glorified hymn of Krṣṇa by Rādhā on the Rāsa-Līlā night and is conspicuous by its neglect of the formalities of the Sūtradhāra and Aṅgī. It is thus begun :

राधा—हे परमेश्वर, तोंहारि चरणक आगुसह। कर योड़ि मागों। हामाक तोहो दान देहु। ताहारि अधर मधुपान विना हामाकु अपरि लागाव नाहि। परम सुकोमल तोंहारि चरण पल्लव, भुवन दुर्लभ। हामार स्तनं युग लै यो व्याधि बाढ़त, ताहे ओहि चरणे दूर करब जानि ताहारि चरणक नित दासी भेलों।[21]

(Ol. 20. P. 5.

21. After Nandī, p. 1.

3. *Gopáladeva*

After Mādhavadeva, Gopaladeva of Bhavanipura became the head of the Assamese Vaiṣṇava movement. His only play is *Janma Yátrá*. It purports to depict the story of Kṛṣṇa's birth and his subsequent removal to Nanda's house. The appearance of the Lord is accompanied by the prayers of the gods :

सूत्र—तोहि समये देवता सब श्रीकृष्णक थुति (स्तुति) करिते आवल। ता देखह शुनह, निरन्तरे हरिबोल हरिबोल

गीत – राग कानड़ा—परिताल।

ध्रुव—आरे चतुरानन परम सभूँ

शङ्कर सुर मुनि गण सङ्गे। Etc.

सूत्र—देवगण सबे नमस्कार करिये कर पुरि (जोरि) थुति (स्तुति) करिते लागल, ता देखह शुनह।

देवता सब—हे परमेश्वर तोहा देवक परम देवता सनातन सर्व्व अन्तर्यामी।[22]

This is how Garga Ṛṣi Purohita of Yadavas performs the Jātakarma of Kṛṣṇa :

सूत्र०—आहे सामाजिक येचन प्रकारे गर्ग रामक जात गणित कय लागल, ता देखह शुनह। निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि बोल। आहे सामाजिक येचन प्रकारे राम कृष्णक जात गणिति कयल, गर्ग आपोन गृहे चलि गेल ता देखह शुनह। निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि बोल।[23]

4. *Ráma Carana Thakura*

The *Kamsa-badha* by one Rāma Carana Thākura, the son of Ramadasa who married the sister of Mādhavadeva, and through whose instrumentality Mādhavadeva became a disciple of Śankaradeva. The play has been noticed by Hemacandra Goswāmī in his *Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Mss*[24]. It represents how Kṛṣṇa and Balarām killed the wrestlers and

22. Pp. 7, 8.

23. P. 14.

24. Pp. 84-5.

their master Kamsa in a duel and set their own parents free.

The Minor Dramatists

An unknown disciple of Śaṅkara Deva wrote the *Syamanta Harana* a drama which represents how Kṛṣṇa took away the jewel known as Syāmanta Maṇi after subjugating Jambuvana, and ultimately married Jāmbuvatī, the latter's daughter.

The tradition of writing in this idiom continued till much later times. For example, *Srikrsnaprayánanámanátakam* as yet unpublished, belongs to the time of king Pramatta Singha, 1745-1751 (A. D.) It contains speeches in Sanskrit, but the songs are in Assamese and Brajabuli[25]. Another contemporary play is *Kumárāharana*[26].

There are many other Maithili dramas in Assam belonging to this period, a study of which is difficult because of their inaccessibility.

Characteristics of Maithili Dramas in Assam

There are quite a few important studies of the Ankiā Nāṭ (as they are known) now available. The Department of Historical and Antiquarian Studies, Government of Assam, have published a collection of fifteen dramas with a critical introduction by its able Assistant Director, Mr. Bani Kanta Kakati has discussed them in his Assamese work, *Purani Asamiyá Sáhitya* and Prof. S. K Bhuyan has described them in his valuable *Assamese Literature, Ancient and Modern* Luzac & Co. Mr. Kaliram Medhi recently and Sjt. B. N. Deka earlier wrote,

25. This information is from Prof. Lekharu communicated to me by Prof. P. Goswami, Gauhati.

26. Information from Prof. Goswami, Gauhati.

on the Literature of the period informative articles in the *Journal of the Kámrúpa Anusandhána Samiti.* A brief summary of the main features of these dramas are given below.

1. *Name*

Though they are called 'Aṅkiā Nāṭ' and are one-act plays (without any division into acts and scenes, all to be staged at one time), yet they are different from the Sanskrit Aṅka-class of plays. Mr. Barua says that most probably the term Aṅkiā is derived from 'Āṅgika Abhinaya'.

2 *General*

As observed above, it should be remembered that these Nāṭs evolved out of the recitals of Kāvyas. The Ojā-Pāli party prior to the Nāṭs used to have its leader Oja (Ojhā ? Jhā ? Maithila Brāhmaṇa ?) who extemporised or recited the songs which were accompanied by Pālis playing on the cymbals[27]. Saṅkara Deva found a bit more of the gesticulations[28] more effective in giving the mass awakening against the bigotry of Tantric worship. Thus, the elements of epic and song were made to combine with gesticulation in these plays.

There was no attempt at realism. The Assamese playwrights were like their Maithila contemporaries more poets and musicians albeit in prose than actors and playwrights. The leaders of the period, Saṅkaradeva and Mādhavadeva, were the greatest painters and musicians of their country. The dramas are, therefore, replete with Rāgas and are composed with the reciter in mind always.

27. *Aṅkiā Nāṭ*, Int., p. 3, f. n. 1.

28. Cf. the vogue of the Maithila work *Hastamuktāvalī* later on.

They are mainly in prose, but lyrics or songs intersperse them throughout. Sanskrit ślokas also occur, mostly as introducing some change or in the Nāndī. The Maithilī of these dramas is often mingled with Assamese forms in songs, but in prose it is generally pure. The importance of the form of the language in these dramas cannot be stressed too much: barring certain orthographical and phonetic changes[29] which undoubtedly has not preserved the language in its purity, and the unconscious mixture of Brajabhāṣā and Assamese forms, it is remarkable that the scribes (who are generally in the case of the available texts of these dramas quite recent) have been fairly correct in giving us the text. The absence of frequent 'candrabindu' and 'ña' must be accounted in this way; yet in rare case they have continued, *e.g.*

गोसाञि (*Keli Gopála* p. 20) माञि (*Bhusana Herebo* p. 4) सेञों नञाञो (*Bhumi letová* p. 3) झुमकगउँ (*Rása Jhúmura* p. 2) सावलेँ (*Pimpara Gucoá* p. 3) तोँहेँ (Several).

Some words are remarkable in these texts, as for example, गोड़ (*Ráma Vijaya* p. 17) सोदर (Ibid. p. 11), हाव and लाव (Ibid. p. 18) आगु (Ibid. p. 2), थिक (Several), सपत (*Rukmini Harana* p. 25) कान्दि कान्दि (Ibid. p. 14), भाकुल (*Pimpara Gucoá* p. 6) वतनी for सौतिनी (*Párijátaharana*, p. 11), धनु टङ्कार दशोदिश (Ibid. p 17), काढि आनल (Ibid. p. 8), वार्ता पूछल (Ibid. p. 6).

3. *Structure*

The subject matter of these plays was generally taken from the two epics (the *Rámáyana* and the *Mahábhárata*) and the purāṇas (esp. those dealing with Kṛṣṇa in particular the

29. See JKAMRUPA X, iii-iv, p. 1 ff.

Bhágavata). They were not great innovators in subject matter, indeed the remark of Mr. Barua that they contain, "pictures of contemporary manners and customs" is hardly true; the Nepal dramas perhaps reveal this in greater degree.

The 'caritra', 'vijaya', and 'Vadha' were the chief types of Kāvyas but they were not infrequently implied in dramas as well, which also admitted the Pariṇaya and Haraṇa types of plays.

The playwright usually displays remarkable success in brevity and concentration; in one act whatever had to be said was said with proper punctuation of religious propaganda.

> "He had little opportunity to develop situations or (for) depicting characters on many facades; yet he was well aware that mere incidents and narrations, without the essential features of drama, any characterisation, do not make a dramatic work worth the name.........(therefore) with the fewest master strokes he created characters and flashed them before the audience like figures on the screen"[30]

The plays generally open with a benedectory prayer in Sanskrit and/or Maithili and at times 'Nāndyante Sūtradhāraḥ' is mentioned in some plays (e. g. *Rukmini-harana*). The Sūtradhāra or the manager calls for his 'Sangi' (friend) in the air : हे सङ्गी की बाथ शुनिये The friend, one of the party, replies : आहे देव दुन्दुभि बाजत Etc. After this, the Sūtradhāra generally does all the recitation himself. (Of course, the Nāndi was also sung by the Sūtradhāra.) It is doubtful if in the Medieval times any other character made his appearance on the stage the way in which the Sūtradhāra goes on describing things (*e.g.* in *Káli-Damana*) can at best explain a pantomime, which is not certain. The purpose

30. *Aṅkīā Nāṭ*, Intr. p. 7.

of the disciples seems to have been to sing the songs that occur in between the prose recitations of the Sutradhāra.

"In modern times probably these plays are regularly acted in the 'bhavanas' of the village where there is a Choghara (or green room), and the data and the bahua (Bipaṭā of Mithila ? the clown ?) also take part along with other characters. There is no indication in the texts of the Ankia Nāṭa that this was done in the 16th and 17th centuries also ; of course the liklihood of painted scenes being used in the background[31] cannot be ruled out.

"In these dramas dialogue is introduced mainly to repeat in prose what has been expressed in the poetry. The Sutradhāra generally uses prose for interpreting situations, communicating facts and filling the gaps, and thereby enabling the audience to follow the action[32]." If the latter statement is true, then there is hardly anythig left to merit the name of dialogue ; it is, indeed, more or less narrative 'Kāvya' accompanied with music and probably incidental gesticulations. In poetry passages, situations are sometimes explained or delicately dwelt upon and generally the moral or religious aspect revealed. Poetry passages, thus, do not contain all or even majority of things given in prose.

Though the acting (or rather recitation) was not taken up by a professional caste in Assam, yet since the leaders of the Vaiṣṇava Movement were great musicians they were

31. Note 'तदनन्तर' । 'देखह सुनह' (cf. *Varṇa-atnākara* पुनि देखु) and the absence of stage directions such as "enter", "exit" (the directions in *Rukminiharaṇa* pp. 11 12 are perhaps introduced by 'modern' scribes). See *Ankiā Nāṭ*, Introduction, p. 2.

32. *Ankiā Nāṭ* Intr. p. 4.

more or less professionally equipped for this task.

4. *Their Achievement*

The Aṅkiā Nāṭs were above all religious sermons. Therefore, their language is direct, forceful and devoid of all ornamentation. There is hardly any figure of speech, any decorative comparison or contrast. Their sole purpose was imparting the faith of Lord Kṛṣṇa. "Bhakti in its manifold forms swayed the life of the masses and became the mainstay of the popular literature.........But unlike the main schools of Northern Vaisnavite thought, Assamese poets preached the dasya and the vatsalya relations between Kṛṣṇa and his devotee[33]." Śaṅkara Deva excelled in dāsya bhāva and called himself "servant of the Lord" (a phrase used by all his followers and disciples). Mādhavadeva emphasized the vātsalya rasa. "Madhava Deva throws a mystical glamour over the story of the Child Krishna and represents him as an eternal child and a sportive incarnation. Krishna may be won over by motherly love and affection as manifested by Jasoda. His pranks and play amused the gopis as well as the cowherds"[34]. Both have approached him not by penance and severe austerity but by simple love and sincere affection. Devoid of any metaphysical obscurity or abstruseness they feel that the 'pati-patnī' or 'nāyaka-nāyikā-bhāva' of the Bengal and other schools of Vaiṣṇava faith were difficult to follow by the masses and were likely to lead to corruption.

The belief that in Kali Yuga Bhakti of Kṛṣṇa alone is the way to salvation is emphasised everywhere, *e g. Keli-Gopála* :

33 *Assamese Literature*, P.E.N.

34. Ibid.

श्रीकृष्ण एवंम्बिध नाना खेलना कय गोपी सबक मनोरथ पूरल। कोहि कामबश "केलि गोपाल" नाम नाटकं सम्पूर्ण भेल। आहे लोकाइ। कोहि भारत वरिखे नरतनु कोटि कलप अन्तरा बीवे नाहि पाइ। विशेषत कलियुगे कृष्ण गुण नाम श्रवण कीर्त्तन विने गति नाहि नाहि। इहा जानि निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि। तदन्तर चपय छन्द मङ्गल बोल[35]

The opportunities of describing Śṛṅgāra are overlooked and the conception of mother is associated with women (cf. the description of Rukmiṇī and Gopī in *Rukminiharaṇa* and *Gopi-Keli* respectively, and the *Rása-Jhúmura, Rámavijaya*, etc.). There is unique restraint exercised in these plays. Imagine Rādhā singing a hymn to Kṛṣṇa. This affects characterization and plot construction. Maithili playwrights of Mithilā proper present a great contrast to these writers in this respect. There is here constantly an attempt to draw a moral against those who are love-stricken (Kāmāturas), for example,

> सूत्र०—ऐचन क्रीड़ाकय कृष्ण कामातुर पुरुषक देखावल। जी मेल राजा कामातुर तनिकर दास।[36]

Most important of all, is the fact that all speeches are punctuated by the praise of the Lord in verse and prose and a constant refrain is chanted:

"निरंतरे हरि बोल हरि बोल"

5. *Final Estimate*

Mr. Barua whom we have quoted so many times above, sums up the final estimate of these playwrights in the following words:

> "Unlike the Sanskrit (*and, we may add, the 'regular Mithilâ plays*) which demanded a cultivated, critical and experienced audience (of the court ?), and

35. Ibid., p. 31, 33. Also cf. *Pârijâtaharaṇa* p. 37; *Arjunabhañjana*, p. 18 and 19 *Coradharâ* p. 9.

36. *Keligopâla* p. 17.

which did not admit the barbarians, ignorant men, heretics, and those belonging to the lower strata of society, the Assamese bhawana is a type by itself, and entirely a popular representation that breaks all social barriers and provides unalloyed enjoyment to the village community not only with occasional recreation and diversion, but also acquaints them with the episodes from the epics and Puranas. Thus in an age, when literacy was confined to the privileged, and learning was essentially aristocratic, the bhawana served as a most powerful agency for dissembling knowledge, and educating the mass on art, literature, morality, religion and philosophy which is the greatest achievement for Assamese dramatic representation.[37]"

37. *Ankia Nat*, Intr. p. 14.

CHAPTER X

MEDIEVAL MAITHILI PROSE

Maithili prose took form as early as the fourteenth century. Jyotirīśvara's *Varnaratnākara* and Vidyāpati's Avahaṭṭha works reveal literary prose at a high level. Unfortunately, after Vidyāpati, the available literature shows no evidence of any further attention being bestowed upon its cultivation.

We can, however, trace the development of prose up to the present day when it rose to its full height as a medium of expression, in certain document and in the medieval Maithili Dramas.

I

DOCUMENTARY PROSE

Documentary prose is made up of various kinds of state papers, judgments, grant-deeds, slave-deeds and contracts. Only a few of them have come to light and therefore the discussion on them must necessarily be taken to be based on the available documents alone.

They are important for the information they give on some aspects of Maithila life and also for the development of the language. Their influence was not at all felt on subsequent Maithili literature but they are representative of the form of the language current in the medieval period. A careful study of the spelling

of some controversial Maithili words in medieval Maithili will undoubtedly remove unnecessary doubts regarding the correct traditional way of spelling them.

Service Deeds or Contracts

The earliest and in many ways the most important of these documents are those in which the sale, gift and the emancipation of slaves or servants are recorded. These deeds are very important for studying the social history of Mithila. It is not known if slavery was current in any form prior to the medieval period but in the beginning of the Seventeenth Century it was an established custom in the province.

There are several kinds of service documents available. The commonest ones are the 'Bahi-khata', the sale or purchase deeds of servants, the deeds of emancipation, called under certain circumstances 'Gaurīva-vā(ca?)ṭikāpatras' and 'Ajātapatras', and 'Caṭilas.' They are executed in set forms. Some of them are in pure Sanskrit and some are in mixed Sanskrit and Maithilī. Some are in the nature of an agreement form which the parties concerned signed. Others are in the form of letters addressed by one party to the other. Many of these mention that the deeds are prepared by a third man, generally a Kāyastha (=clerk ?) and that he received a fixed sum for executing the deed.

The Sanskrit documents[1] of this class are the most elaborate and formal ones. They are of large size and give various details, legal and religious, to make them appear, properly executed deeds. Indeed we have evidence to

1. JBORS June 1921 (Viṣṇulala Śāstri's discoveries dated 528 and 549 L. S. and some from Raj Library, Darbhanga and in my possession.

show that in later times some of these were executed even on Stamped Paper in accordance with the law of the land. They invariably mention (a) the date in La. Sam., Śake, Vikrama Saṁvata and Faslī San ; (b) the ruling authorities right from the Moghul Emperor the titular head of the Indian Empire, or the East India Company or their agents, to the ruling sovereign of Mithila ; (c) the name of the persons purchasing, transferring or emancipating a slave; (d) the caste, age, price and the distinguishing marks on the body of the slave ; (e) the conditions governing the durability of the deed and the obedience of the slave ; and (f) lastly, the signature and consent of the parties concerneda nd their witnesses.

Their vernacular counterparts are small in size and simpler in form. They do not give dates in all the Eras : they do not mention the authorities at all. Their main concern seems to be to state the facts and conditions of service. The signatures, including those of the witnesses and sometimes of the clerk, however, continue.

1. *The Gauríva-cátiká*

The 'Gaurīva-caṭikās' are the earliest dated vernacular deeds of this kind extant. They were first brought to light by the late Dr. Sir Gaṇgānātha Jha in a note on a Sanskrit Judgment of MM Sacala Miśra[2]. He thought the term 'Gaurīva-cāṭikā' was a technical name referring to 'slavery' or 'service'. On a careful study of the documents where this name occurs it appears that it was a name applied to the act of emancipating the daughter of one's 'Bahiā' (servant) when she was married to some one else.

The first 'Gaurīva-cāṭikā' available is that of 1615 quoted by Dr. Jha :

2. JBORS, June-Sept., 1921, p. 122.

शाके १५३७ वैशाखशुक्लचतर्थ्यां शुक्रे श्रीरामभद्रशर्म्मा श्रीकगा-(पा ?)ल दासेषु मौरविवां (वा ?) टिका पत्रमर्पयति तदत्रेत्यादि हमरा वहिश्राक हराइक वेटो पदुमीनाम्नी गौरवर्णा जे ताहरें वेटाञे श्रीकृष्णामे भिश्राहलि से हमे एक टका लए तोहरा देलिश्रावे ताहि सञो हमरा कञोन सम्बन्ध नहि साक्षित्वमत्र श्री रामालमिश्र (, रमाल मि॰) श्री सिद्धिनाथझा श्रीमदनन्तमहाशयानां लिखित मिदमुभयानुमतेन श्रीगङ्गाधरशर्म्मणेति श्रीराम भद्रस्य ॥

'(*Literal translation*) "In the Saka year 1537 (1615 A D) on the fourth day of the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha, Friday, Śrī Rāmabhadra Śarmā makes over this deed of sale relating to slavery (*or deed of emancipation*) to Śri Kagalā Dasa. Tadatra, etc." (*This appears to stand as the abbreviated form of some legal formula*[3].)

(*So far the language of Sanskrit*)

"The daughter of my slave Harai, by name Padumī, fair-complexioned, who is married to your son Śrī Kṛṣṇa I have given unto you, after taking from you one rupee ; I have no connection with her."

(*This is in Maithili*).

"As witnesses hereof are Śrī Rāmala Miśra, Śrī Siddhinātha Jha, and Śri Ananta. This has been written, with the permission of both parties, by Śri Gaṅgādhara Śarma."

"(Signature) of Śrī Rāmabhadra."

(*This is again in Sanskrit.*)

As regards the subject-matter of the document, it is interesting to note that the deed is drawn in favour of the father-in-law of the girl concerned ; and as such would appear to be more in the nature of a deed of emanicipation than of sale. The executor of the deed talks of having "given away"—"not sold"—the girl.

The language also of the vernacular portion of the document is interesting, as the forms वेटाञे, कृष्णाञे, हमे, देलिश्रावे सञो and कञोन are not current in modern Maithili, in which we have corresponding forms वेटाकें, कृष्णाकें, हम देलिश्रइ, सौं (or सँ—even स) and कोनो. The ञे termination in the first two words would appear to stand for the

3. This is given in Sanskrit documents very fully.

Dative है termination of Sanskrit, which in the modern form, has been replaced by the कें (Dative), probably borrowed from Hindi[4]."

Besides, we should note how quitely the Sanskrit expression 'पद्मनी नाम्नी' is introduced in the midst of a vernacular sentence. In spite of the archaic flavour of the style and the matter-of-fact statement and the set form of the language it marks a real advance on the syntax of Early Maithili Prose.

The next document of this kind, dated 1667/68, shows the changes that had come in the language[5] :

लं० सं० ५४६ अगहन ८ बुधे श्रीगङ्गापतिशर्मणि बेरौंच सँ श्रभोरा शर्म्मा गौरीव चाटिकापत्रमर्पयति देशव्यवहारे गोराडर १ रुपैबा लेल गतिराम कैवर्त्तक बेटी जलिबा श्रीगङ्गापति झा कें......विवाहार्थं स्वस्व परित्याग कए देलिएन्हि । एहि अर्थं साक्षी लेखक श्रीलाल सही ॰ भोरा झाक

The mixture of Sanskrit and Maithili is found here as before: the formalities being entered in Sanskrit and the facts in the vernacular. But there is no Sanskrit at the end. The endings in ेे's disappear now. It is worth noting that the medieval Maithili equivalent of the rupee is 'रुपैबा' and not 'टाका' as in modern Maithili. The term 'गोराडर' is not clear, but it seems to refer to the 'fees' exacted for emancipating the girl.

The 'Gaurīvacāṭikas' were granted at least till the days of MM Sacala Miśra (c. 1794), for, people could claim the right of granting Gaurīvacāṭikāpatras to the daughters of their slaves in his days[6].

4. Ibid.

5. MITHILANKA ii, p. 12 quoted from JBORS *op. cit.*

6. As is clear from his judgment printed in JBORS, June 1920.

2. *The Bahikhata*

The 'Bahikhatas' or the 'Slave-Sale deeds' were a sort of contract to serve in return for some money which bound the servant to one master alone. Most of these are in pure Sanskrit. The earliest extant 'Bahikhata' is dated as far back as 509 La. Sam. (=1627/28A. D.)[7]:

सिद्धिरस्तु परमभट्टारकेत्यादि राजावली पूर्वके लक्ष्मणसेनदेवीय गत-नवाधिक पर्श (?) शताब्दे लिख्यमाने यत्रांकेनापि गत सँवत ल० सं० ५०६ श्रावणवदि १४ रवौ पुनः परमभट्टारकाश्वपति गजपति नरपति राजत्रयाधिपति सुरत्राणशासत् साहजहाँ सम्मानित नव्वोवाव हकीकति खाना-सम्भुज्यमान तीर-भुक्त्यन्तरित तीसाठतया संलग्न झोरिग्रामग्रामे महोपाध्याय श्री प्रद्युम्न महाशया दासी क्रयणार्थं स्वधनं प्रयुज्यते धन ऐहकोप्येतत् सकाशात्तु लियाम-सं श्री बाछलि शर्म्मा एतदत्र नानामध्यस्थकृतमूल्यन्टूरी राजत। स्तौ (?) शूद्री-मादायामीषु धनिषु षाडूनिजातीया स्वदेशितद्वादशवर्ष वयस्कां सुकुमारीनाम्नीं दासीं विक्रीतवान् यत्र विक्रीतधात्री ६१ शून्याङ्कुरं ...मत्र हरिश्चन्द्र-सं श्री खेदूशर्म कर्महास श्रीगोढाइ शर्म परौलीसँ श्री ... ।

Other extant documents of this class are dated 1746,[8] 1755[9] 1812/13,[10] 1820, 1836 and 1838. It appears that after the mid-Nineteenth Century slave-sale was not favoured by the court and, therefore, they continued to be executed only as popular ways of arranging service-contracts.

Vernacular counterparts of these documents are rare. Those which have come to light are generally in the nature of gift or transfer of slaves from one master to another. For example, a deed dated 1177 Fasli (=1770

7. Same as f.n. 5 above.

8. In the Raj Library, Darbhanga, seen through the courtsey of the Librarian.

9. Ibid.

10. This and the rest are in my possession unle otherwise mentioned.

A. D.) speaks of Mahārāja Pratāpasiṁha (1761-1776) transferring two slaves to one Rucipati Jha:

(नागरी मे)

(माही)

महाराज श्री श्री प्रतापसिंह बहादुर देवदेवानां सदा समर विजयिनां श्री भैरबीआ ओ भैरविआ......लीखतं आगाँ तोरा दूहू भाइके श्री रुचिपत झाक सुपुर्द कएल अछ खातीर जमा सौ ओझा मबकुरक ओतए काम काज करिहह हुनका ओतए वेझुमहा कमाएल करिहह चैत शुदि ५ रोज सन् ११७७ साल ॥[11]

and another, dated 1218 Fasli (=1811 A. D.) is a deed granting the services of the son of one Ratneśvara to one Jayadatta Jha:

श्री रामः

स्वस्ति ॥ परमाराध्य श्री जयदत्त झा महाशयेषु श्री रत्नेश्वरस्य नमस्काराः समाचार जे पलटाक बेटा श्रीहरंगिआ बहिआ हमर बालक सो अपनुका क लग अछ तकर हमे अपन सत्व परित्याग कय बहिआ अपनुका के देल कालि हमे हमर केयओ दावा कर तो झूठा एतदर्थे दानपत्र देल अपने पुत्र पौत्रादिक्रमे दाशकर्म्म नियुक्त करब इति ताः २६ आ(षाढ़) सन् १२१८ साल मुलकी।

श्री रत्नेश्वरशर्म्मणः

साक्षी

श्री टेकनाथ झा

ओ श्री नारायणदत्त झा

साः (पो)खरिआ

It will be noticed that these two deeds are in the form of letters. From the point of view of the development of the language the words 'अपनुका' (अपनुकाके), 'अछ', 'कालि', 'हमे' (nominative), and 'केयओ' are to be noted. They are far removed from the archaic forms in the 'Gaurīvacāṭikāpatra' of 1615, and yet they are forms not current in modern Maithilī. The structure of the sentence is more supple and shows greater awareness of the connection of the clauses and sub-clauses.

11. Raj Library.

3. *The Ajátapatra*

The deeds of emancipation are known as 'Ajātapatras.' The following is a Ajātapatra dated 1235 Fasli (=1828 A. D.) :

स्वस्ति अजातपत्रमिदं ॥ श्री बाबूनाथ मिश्रक श्रो श्री श्री मुनि मिश्रक श्रो श्री अनाथी मिश्र क श्री इलमना बहि(आ)कें आशीष मार्गां तोहरो मादक तोहरा बहि(नि)क तोहर तीनू प्राणीक मोल रुपैआ १६ से सोहो रुपैआ भरि पाओल तोहरा तिनू प्राणीक अजातपत्र लिखि देल कालिह काला कोनो तकरार न करी तँ हाकीम पञ्चक घर झुठा होए सँन १२३५ साल भादव बदि दशमी रोवशुक...मोकाम पवरिआही ।

4. *The Akarárapatra.*

From the beginning of the Nineteenth Century, besides selling and purchasing slaves, the tendency of entering into partial contracts of service seems to have found favour with the people. They are called 'Akarārapatras' and 'Janauḍhīs' (or Janauṭi or Janauḍi). They differ from the 'Bahikhatas' in that they do not bind the servant to the master in every respect. He remains free to choose his way of life as he pleases so long as he accepts the conditions of the 'Akarārapatra' and the 'Janauḍhī.' These documents are executed by potters, washermen and labourers in the field in favour of one or many persons.

In the following contract ('Akarārapatra') the potters undertake to do all the repairs and general upkeep of the well of Kapilādatta Mishra :

लिखतं बैजू पन्डीत श्रो बोद्दी पन्डीत श्रो गीरधरी पन्डीत श्रो मगहू पन्डीत श्रो ऐका पन्डीत कुम्हारक श्री कपिलादत्त मिश्रर कें प्रणाम आर्गां

हमरा सबहि एहाँ के अकरार लिखि देल अछि जे जखन जखन इन्दार ढठाब वा भँगठाय तखन तखन त उढ़ाह भगठाइ छोड़ा दीअ एहाँक ओतय कोनहु बातक उजूर न करी मजूरी न मागीअ अपने खुस बजाय सँ अकरार-पत्र लिखि देल सन १२२१ पूस भदि १० रोज मंगल—[12]

(18119 A. D.)

The washerman promises in the following documents to wash the clothes of Keśava for an annual pay of annas fourteen only[18] :

लिखतं अकरारनामा श्री माल (न ?)की धोबि मौजे उजान प्रगना घरौरक आगाॅ—हम श्राकेशव बाबूक धोबि आज तारिक सँ खुद भव मेल कीअ—श्री बचाइ सँ दर दरमहाक तालुक न खुदत मजुदा धोयल करीअ दरमहा चौदह आना सालीना लेल करीअ इति सन १२५१ साल चैत बदि १४ रोज

गो॰ श्री सन फूल मंडर औ श्री मक्ला कापड़ि

साकिन उजान प्रः घरौर--

सही श्री मालकी धोबि अकरार लिखल से सही

(1844 A. D.)

5. *The Janauḍhi*

The documents that follow show a slight change in form. They can be generally described as 'Janauḍhis' or 'agreements of service'. The 'जन' or 'labourer' agreed to serve a particular person, and no other person, in lieu of some payment. It appears that there was a difference between the slave (बहिआ) and this kind of labourer (जन). The latter had to be paid regular wages and was bound to serve only conditionally, whereas the former was bound to serve the master without any regular wages—of course, he was looked after as a member of the family and was provided with every necessity of life by his master.

12. MS with me.

13. Annas fourteen meant very much more in those days than they do today. This excluded, of course, other forms of payment by the householder.

The earliest extant 'Janauḍhi' goes back to 1819[14]. In this (and in another dated 1857[15]) the labourer agrees to serve as a labourer twice a month; in another, of 1851,[16] he accepts to work for half day, per month; and in still another of 1859,[17] to serve once a month only. The last contract is quoted here:

गोः श्री दुबरि झा
श्री भुज्ञा साहु
साकिन गजहड़ा
प्रगना बबदी =

सही श्री गिरिधारी
साहु जिम्मा श्री
मालिक साहु जनौढि
लिखि देल से सही =

लि० श्री गिरिधारी साहु स आइ साकिन गजहड़ा प्रगना यबदी आगाँ हम श्री बखेडी मिश्र सौं जनौढि लेल। आठ-८ आना जिम्मा श्री मालिक साहुक ताके करार कएल अछि जे माहवारी एक गोट क जन देल करी वेडजूर ताहि मध्य कोनो खटका करी चासक हर्ष्वा (हर्जा) दी शिवाए एहाँक काज नहि रहे तषन आन गिरहस्तक खेत कमाइ तान्हि मध्य कोनो बात क बलवा ने करी इति सन १२७७ साल तारिक पहिल दीन चैत—

It is clear from this document that the labourer was under the control of the person from whom he took a 'Janauḍhi' though he served him only for a limited period and for regular wages.

6. *The Nistárapatra*

There used to be other kinds of contracts too; contracts (karāra) for payment of debts and for their remittance ('Nistārapatra'). For example, in the following one Lakṣmaṇa promises to make his wife the slave-maid-servant

14. MS in Raj Library, Darbhanga.
15. MS with me.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.

if he could not pay the sum hack by the Pūrṇima of Caitra 1270 Fasli (=1863):

लिः लक्ष्मण अमात साकीन पिलखवाड़ प्रगन्ना हाटी आगाँ हम श्रीलक्ष्मीकान्त (झा ?) सँ कर्ज़ (कर्ज) लेल अछि रुपैआ दुइ २ क तकर करार कएल अछि ये चैत्र पूर्णिमा लगात महाजनी दर सँ सूद लगाए रुपैआ दीअ नहि दीअ तँ एही दुइ रुपैआ मध्य अपन बहु नौडी कए दी बेउजूर सन १२७० साल चैत्र बदि अष्टमी रोज शुक्र वैः बोकबी मिश्र साः ककरौड़ प्रः यरैल—[18]

सही लक्ष्मण अमात ये लिखल
से सही बोकवी मिश्र साः ककरौड प्रः यरैल

In one of these documents some persons promise to pay fines and grind some corn if they allow their cattle to graze in the fields of one Lakṣmīnātha Jha or if they cut away the fodder from the fields. (Dated 1199 Fasli = 1792 A. D.):

गोः श्री बुद्धिनाथ
झा ओ सिबल
झा साः गंगौली

सही मनसा ओ
सिताइ ओ अँइ-
ठहा रोसन ( )
लिखल से सही

✓श्रीलक्ष्मीनाथ झा जीउ केँ

✓लिखितं मनसा रोसन ओ सिताइ रोसन ओ अँइठहा रोसन साकिन गंगौली प्रगन्ना बरौर आगाँ हमे श्रील✓

मो......चिलका लिखि देल अछि जे हमरा सबक गाए बहद बकरो ए सबहि खेत ब(च ?)र अपने सबहि नार काटिअ तँ ताहि खेतक औंबल बिगहाक . पिसा) करीअ सरकारक साबा रुपैआ जुलबाना दीअ बेउजूर सन ११९९ साल माघ शुदि ३ रोज—[19]

Grant Deeds

The grant deeds are known as 'Vṛttipatras.' They are mainly made up of a detailed description of the purpose of the grant and of the area and location of the land donated. They also set out the conditions under which it is to be enjoyed by the receipient and his successors. Most of these are formal, but some are informal also.

18. Ibid.
19. Raj Library, Darbhanga.

The formal grant deeds are of two kinds. The first is illustrated in a deed given to Maṇinātha Thakura by Mahārāja Pratāpasiṁha dated 1170 Fasli (=1763 A. D.):

सिद्धि-महाराज श्री प्रतापसिंह देवदेवानां सदा समरविजयिनां परमाराध्य श्री मणिनाथ ठाकुर महाशये वृत्तिपत्रमिदम् मौजे दिवरा श्रो बिठौली श्रो कमलपुर श्रो मगहा श्रो सहोरिया श्रो गुड़िया श्रो कसराइ निष्टर्द बकला अभैराम सिले बीरनगर प्रगना धर्मपुर सरकार मुंगेर सुब्बे बिहार आँगा मौजे आन मजकूर क जमीन मध्य सन ११७० साल सौं खारिज जमा कए श्री प्रीति ब्रह्मोत्तर भूमि देल अङ्कि सादे जव हाथक कठा खिल बिगहा ५१५ पाँच सौ पन्द्रह बिगहा। मौजे दिवरामध्य ८७॥२ मौजे कमलपुर मध्य ७८। मौजे सहोरिआ मध्य १०२।३ कसराई निष्टर्द मध्य ४४॥१ मौजे बिठौली मध्य ८॥१ मौजे मगहा मध्य १२।१ मौजे गुडिया मध्य ७२।१ मौजे अभैराम मध्य ६१।४ खातिर जमासौं तरदुत तलास कैल करब। पैदावार जे हो से अहाँ पुत्र पौत्रादि मिलि भोग कैल करब। खारिज जमा श्री प्रीति ब्रह्मोत्तर भूमि जानि केओ मोवाहिम नहि होएत माघ बदि ११ रोज सन सदर।[20]

Another extant documents of this class is dated 1171 Fasli(=1764).[21]

The second form is illustrated in the following grant dated 1187 Fasli(=1780 A. D.):

(देवनागरीमे)

(माही दसखत फाटल छैक)

सिद्धिः॥ महाराज श्री श्री माधवसिंह बहादुर देवदेवानां सदासमरविजयिनां श्री ईशदत्त झा महाशयेषु वृत्तिपत्रमिदं मौजे सिरवा प्रगना हावी सरकार तिरहुति मुजाफ सूबए बिहार। आगाँ मौजे मजकुरक जमीन मध्य सन ११८७ साल सौं खारिज जमा कए श्री–प्रीति ब्रह्मोत्तर जमीन देल अङ्क सादे जवहा....ठ बोल बिगहा।

१५)

पंद्रह बिगहा

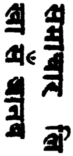
खातिर जमा सौं तरद्दुद तल्लास करब। पैदावार जे होअ से अहाँक

20. Jivananda Thakura, "Candrakulapraśasti," p. 17.
21. Raj Library, Darbhanga.

पुत्र पौत्रादि भोग्य कएल करव । पारिज अमा-श्री-प्रीति ब्रह्मोत्तरजानि केओ ओजाहिम नहि होएते माघ वदि ५ रोज वन सार ।[22]

Another similar document is dated 1221 Fasli (=1814 A. D.).[23] These are semi-formal grant-deeds.

The informal grant of land is conveyed in the form of a personal letter, *e. g.* the following [dated 1150 Fasli (=1743 A. D.)]:



स्वस्ति ॥ तर्कार्णवी सञ्चरण कविता कुमुद्वती केलिमान महोपाध्याय श्रीमहीश्वर झा महाशयेषु महाराज श्री विष्णुसिंहस्य नमस्कारा-कुशलञ्च । मौजे मदना बछौर मध्य जेहाँ काँ अछ तकर उत्पन्न होअ से अनाए लेब खर्च करब माघ वदि ५ चन्द्रे सन ११५० साल[24]

Another such informal grant deed is dated 1155 Fasli (=1748 A. D.).[25]

The vocabulary of all these deeds is dominated by Persian and Arabic. The reason is obvious. Persian was the language of the Moghul Empire and it was supposed that legal dignity will be added to these documents if they were in keeping with it. There is not, like Sanskrit grant deeds, any literary or descriptive beauty in them. They are simple and factual. All that they reveal as prose specimens is the change in the form of some words (*e. g.*, जेहाँ) and in the predominence of non-Sanskritic elements.

22. Ibid.
23. Jivananda Thakura, op. cit. p. 30.
24. Raj Library, Darbhanga.
25. Ibid.

There are some extant documents where the grant is cancelled. One of these, dated 1136 Fasli (= 1779 A.D.) is quoted as an illustration :

(माही ओ दसखत फाटल छैक)

महाराज श्रीश्री माधवसिंह बहादुर देवदेवानां सदा-समर-विजयिनां श्री महिपानि सम्मेसु नमस्कार आगाँ मौजे परसा प्रगन्ना जबदो मौजे मजकूर श्री गङ्गादत्त झा काँ ब्रह्मोत्तर अमल मामुल स छैन्हि से हमे बरखास कए देलै अेहाँ मोजाहिम जनु होइअ अगहन शुदि (   ) रोज सन ११८६ साल मोकाम पटना = [26]

Judgments and Other State Papers

Since Mr. K. P. Jayswal published a memorable Sanskrit Judgment of Maithila court of 17?4[27], it became clear that Mithila alone could preserve the longevity of the adminstration of Hindu Law till modern times. These documents called Vyavasthāpatras, were probably prepared sometimes in vernacular also in later years.

We have, however, some documents which are very much like vernacular judgments in a style different from the Sanskrit judgments. The earliest of these is the briefest and is datep as early as 1150 Fasli (= 1743 A. D.) :

सिद्धि ॥ श्री रामसिंहठक्कुराणां परम सुप्रतिष्ठ श्री गङ्गादत्त झा कें व्यवस्था पत्रन्दाति। आगाँ साबीक गहनाक उत्सर्ग भूमि श्री⤫प्रीति बिगहा ५३। मौजे पौनी प्र० आलापुर सन ११५० साल सँ मौजे मजकुर मध्य अेहाँ के देल अछि भूमि बिगहा त्रिपन्न। अपन खातिर जमासँ तल्लास तरद्दुद कराओल। श्री शु० १ रोज सन सद्र मोकाम कचहरी। [28]

The next document available of this kind is dated 1199 Fasli (= 1792). [29] Unfortunately a portion of it has been burnt but it appears to

26. Ibid. (obtained from one Padmanabha Jha).

27. JBORS 1920.

28. Same as f.n. 26 above.

29. Ibid.

have been a full statement. It is not clear if it is a mere statement recorded in an assembly of experts or a judgment. From what has remained of it, it appears that it describes the details of a quarrel between one Rucidatta Jha and one Śaṅkaradatta Jha and the account of it is certified by several people :

(अग्निदग्ध)

श्री श्री महाराजक

......बति हाल ॥ श्रीरुचिदत्तझा श्रीशंकरदत्तझाकाँ झगड़ा श्रीकृत्तिकानाथ-झाक डेरासँ

.........नेओत खल जतए सञे अवइत राति बड़ मेल श्रीहरेरामझाक द

..............व आएल तखन श्रीरुचिदत्त झा काँ तमाकू लगलैन्ह ते.. ...

.....................झाक चौकीपर गेलाह तखन श्रीरुचिदत्तझाक ठकुरिकेँ

....तखनु क स्थिति ईजे श्री हरेराम झा श्री आँखि झाबाहस

....चौकीहि पर रहथि तखन श्री शङ्करदत्त झा श्री छोटा झा दुइ

.............लेले ओठाञे अएलाह आकुल मेल तखन बौकाकेँ सबहि

.........चललाह तखन श्री रुचिदत्त झा व्यस्तो छलाह तथापि हुन दुरहि

.........हलन्हि जे बहिआ छाड़ि देह पञ्चक निसाफ जे होएत से करब से

..................नहि मानले तखन श्री शंकरदत्त झा बहिआ केँ श्रीरु....

..................................पर सबहिँ गेला तखन .. ..

बहिआ समेत श्रीरुचिदत्त झा खसलाह तखन श्री... ....

दत्त झा श्री छोटा झा बौकाकेँ घए लेल तेँ मुकाञे मारै. .. ..

गेल रह से निश्चय नहि की केवल बौकहि काँ कीबा श्री रुचि... ....

मोकदमा रातिक तखन श्री रुचिदत्त झा सोर करइत रहथि जे खून होइछ खून होइछ से सोर सुनि श्री शम्भुनाथ झा श्री शङ्करदत्त मिश्र वैद्य । श्री भवानीदत्त झा श्री वेणी झा श्री दुल्लह झा दौड़लाह आओर इतरलोक बहुत तखन

.............हि बहुत कलकैन्ह तथापि हुनि नहि छाड़ले तखन श्री रुचिदत्त क

.....................गेल हाकिम केँ कहलक ततए सञे चारि पेआदा

..............श्री शङ्करदत्त झा ओ बौआ बहिआ समेत कचहरी लए

.......हमरा सबहु जनइ छिअ सन ११६६ साल पौष ५ वदि रोज २

अत्र——

[श्री साधु झा श्री हरेराम झा श्री आँखि झा

साक्षी—
श्री शम्भुनाथ झा श्री शङ्करदत्त मिश्र वैद्य
श्री भवानीदत्त झा श्री वेणी झा

Lastly, we have a decision of the Maharaja of Mithila dated 1246 Fasli (= 1839 A. D.):

सिद्धि=महाराज श्री श्री रुद्रसिंह बहादुर देव-देवानां-सदासमरविजयिनां श्री देवकीनन्दन ठाकुर कें व्यवस्थापत्रमिदम्। आगाँ मौजे परसौनी, प्रगना नारेदिगर सरकार तिरहुति मुजाफ सूबे विहार देहात मिलकिअति सरकार मौजे मजकुर क सन् १२४६ बारह सै छैआलीस साल सौं खील जमीन उपनयनाक दक्षिण मध्य खारीज जमा मिनहा इजुमि ऐहाँ कें देल अछि। ताहे कुउ हाथक लग्गा से बिगहा ६० नब्बे बिगहा खील। खातिर जमा सो जमीन मजकुर तरदुत तलास कराय पैदावार जे हो से एहाँ पुत्रपौत्रादि भोग्य कैल करब। खारिज जमा मिनहा जानि केओ मोजाहिम नहि होएत। इति सावोन शुदि ६ षष्ठी रोज सन सदर।[30]

Other State papers that are available are 'paravānās' (1796[31] and 1800[32]), appointment letters[33] *e. g.*, from Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha (1776—1808), administrative and business letters[34] (1744, 1840, 1845 etc.) and instructions for punishments. They are generally in dignified and highly Persianised style *e.g.*, in the following one dated 1245 Fasli (= 1838/9 A.D.) the entire passage is full of Persian and Arabic words:

महाराज श्री छत्रसिंह बहादुर देवदेवानां सदासमरविजयिनां कल्याणकोटि निलयेषु चिरजीवी श्री देवकीनन्दन शुभोदयेषु शुभाशीः=आगाँ प्रगनान हाटी गैरह सरकार तिरहुति देहात मिलकिअति सरकार प्रगनान मजकूर क वसूल तहसील अनजाम मालगुजारी हेतु ऐहाँ कें मोकरर कैल अछि खातिर जमा सो सबो रोज हाजिर रही। ओ इथा मजकुर अनजाम देलकरब, पेसकार सँ हर रोज बेहरी वकिऔता मे देहात खानगी ओ ड्योढी आती ओ कामत-

30. Jivananda Thakura, op. cit. p. 40-41.
31. Raj Library, Darbhanga.
32. Ibid.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.

गैरह असामी वार बुझि बाँकी बरवक्त असूल तहसील कैल करब। ओ देहात सीरक साल आखिर मेला पर बमोजिम हुकुमनामा मोफसल अमला सभके मँगाय जमाबन्दी ओ जमाखर्च कराओल करब। पेसकार ओ मोसफी के लब जमाबन्दी ओ जमाखर्च बेमोजिम हुकुमनामा जाँची बुझि सरकार बुझाबोल करब। ओ देहातो नापी अछि तकर फसील ऐआमहि पर मुंशीक हजूर इतलाय दब रवाना कराओल करब। बो हुकम सरकार क कोनो खराजात सिवाए मामूली जमा खर्च मध्य मोजरा जनु दिआबी। ओ जे मोकदमान सब मध्य दस्तअदाज जनु होइ Etc, तेरह रोज सन १२४५ साल सिरस्ता नम्बर १०८४ [35]

Ordinarily, however, a more homely and easy language is used *e.g.*, in the following letter addressed by one Vijayagovindasiṁha in 1252 Fasli (=1845 A. D.) there is no mannerism or artificiality:

स्वस्ति हरिवदाराध्य प्रणति मात्रेके शाध्य श्री केशव वा चरण शरोजेषु राज श्री श्री विजयगोविन्दाय प्रणामाश्शतं। एतए सभलोकक्काँ कुशल ओतएक कुसलादि वार्त्ता पाए शनन्द होअ = आगाँ शुरति जे श्री राजेन्द्रनराएन ओ श्री महेन्द्रनराएन राए क ओतए वावति ओ आशलात बीसफ जमीदारी क पाँच लाख तेरह हजार कएक सए कै एक रुपैया पाओना हमर ताहि अन्दर मध्य हुनका दूहु गोटाक ही शानबेली प्रगना निलाम भेलइन्हि से निशाम जमिंदारीक पावल Etc. [36]

Letters

There are numerous letters[37] in the latter half of this period. But unfortunately they are not of this literary kind: they only serve the purpose of conveying brief messages of welfare or of request for some work. In the letters of Mahārājakumāra Vāsudeva[38] to his father-in-law Jānakīnātha Jha there is some amount of enthusiasm and feeling. In general the following

35 Jivananda Thakura, op. oit. p. 40-41.

36. Raj Library, Darbhanga.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

letter will provide an illustration of style: they are not used as a form of writing:

बाचब लिखाबँ समाचार   ✓✓ईश्वर

स्वस्ति सकल मङ्गलालय चिरजीवि श्री देवकीनन्दन शुभोदयेषु महाराज श्री श्री कृष्णसिंह बहादुरस्य शुभाशीश्शतं एतय कुशल श्रोतबक कुशल पाय आनन्द होअ। आगाँ बहुत दीन सँ जेहाँ अपना माक ओ जेहाँ अपन कुशल छेमक बार्त्ता नहि लिखले अछ तहि सँ चित्त बहुत लागल अछ तें लिखल अछ जे श्री—क अनुग्रह सँ जेहाँ अपना माक ओ अपन कुशल छेम लिखब जे चित्त खुशी होअ इति आश्विन शुदि ११ सन १२४१ साल।

आगाँ जेहाँ अपना माकँ हमर प्रणाम कहि देबैन्हि।—इति [39]

Conclusion

Rarely do we come across any literary beauty in these documents. They have no scope for imagination—they are dry and matter-of-fact papers. The characteristics of documentary prose as revealed in the above illustrations are brevity of statement, economy of words, simplicity and clarity. They are not literary because their business is to be detached and impersonal. They have almost all the qualities of legal prose. There is clear-headedness, the exact use of words and the authoritative tone. There are also necessarily jargons, technical terms, mixed with ordinary words.

Their importance in the history of Maithilī lies in filling a gap in the development of prose, by revealing certain forms of words and the syntax developing from the archaic to the modern, and in allowing us a glimpse into the social history of Mithilā and serving generally as historical records.

II

PROSE IN THE DRAMAS

There is no vernacular prose in Kīrtaniyā

39. Ibid.

dramas. If there is any indication of it, it is that prose might have been orally introduced after the tradition of Jyotirīśvara's *Varnaratnākara*. In 'regular' Maithili Kīrtaniyā dramas there is not even this scope for vernacular prose.

In some of the dramas of Nepal, however, prose does find a place. There are no long written passages extant but small sentences are introduced in between the songs, as illustrated in discussing the 'regular' dramas of Nepal. The purpose seems to have been to provide a contrast and a relief to the monotony of song and music.

Mr. Augustus Conrady distinguishes two layers of the language used in prose passages of *Hariscandranrtyam* of Siddhi-Narasiṁha. The first he considers is that which is intended for the conversation of higher class of people and the second in which the lower characters speak.

In the opera-like Nepalese dramas there is not even this much of prose. Dr. P. C. Bagchi has suggested that there were oral prose passages introduced in them in the way in which Kīrtaniyā dramas might have done it.

It is in the Aṅkiā Nāṭs that prose is used most widely. Indeed, more than three-fourths of the text of these dramas is in prose. Not only are prose passages extensively used, they are also the greatest literary prose specimens in the Middle period.

Prose in these dramas has all the good qualities of narrative prose. They can convey to the spectators "the speed of events and the actuality of objects" through "concreteness, economy and speed" The following passages illustrate this:

(i) सूत्र—श्रीकृष्णक परम निभयबाणी शुनि हरिषे कालि सपरिवारे कृष्णक प्रणाम कयल । चरणक धूलि लेलह । हे स्वामि कृष्ण विदाय कयल बूझि प्रेमे सलोतक नयने जैचे चलल, ताहि देखह शुनह । निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि ।[40]

(ii) सूत्र--हे सामाजिक ! भार्गव रामक जिनिये श्रीरामचन्द्र प्रिया सहिते अयोध्यापुर प्रवेशल । रामक माता कौशल्या श्रीरामक विजय बात शुनिये अनेक सीसव सहित परम मङ्गल गीत आनन्द बाजना बजाइ बरकन्याक हाते एक ठाम करिकहो महोत्सवे गृह प्रवेश करावल । आसने बैठाइ रामक सीताक माथें दूर्बाक्षत सिद्धारि आशीर्वाद कय कहो, परम उत्सुके कौशल्य आनन्दे नृत्य कयल । रामक एहन बिवाह महोत्सव सम्पूर्ण भेल ।[41]

(iii) सूत्र--ऐछन परकारे कृष्णक बिवाह भेल । तदनन्तर ब्रह्मा इन्द्र आदि जत देवता,पातालक बासुकी प्रभृति जत नाग, पृथिवीक जत राजा, सबाको सादरे श्रीकृष्ण गन्ध चन्दन, पुष्प, ताम्बूल, वस्त्र, अलङ्कारे परम सन्तुष्ट कयल; अतः परे परम कौतुके त्रैलोक्य लोक जय कृष्ण घूषिये समाज...स्वकी स्वकी स्थाने चलिये अन्या अन्य आश्चर्य गुणरूप महिमा कीर्त्तन कयकहो सशोदिशे गेल ।[42]

In the above extracts the playwrights have not elaborated or decorated their descriptions. There is no scope for mingling the personality of the author or the narrator with the objects described. The words are few and do not allow the speed to be clogged. As for concreteness we have expressions like चरणक धूलि, आसने बैठाइल, गन्ध चन्दन etc.' There is simplicity of the most naked kind—no figures of speech, no difficulties of idiom and construction, nothing to obstruct easy intelligibility of the passages. The movement of the lines is rapid though not animated.

This does not mean that the prose style of the Aṅkiā Nāṭs is not elevated. They are punctuated every now and then with 'निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि बोल' and have religious fervour in most of their speeches.

सूत्र—आहे सामाजिक लोक, जे नन्द नन्दन श्रीकृष्ण जाहे पाद पद्म ब्रह्मा कहो

40. *Kālī-Damana* p. 17.
41. *Rāma-Vijaya*, p. 26.
42. *Rukmiṇīharaṇa*, p. 45.

ध्यान धरय, ओहि श्रीकृष्ण भकत गोपीसबक नाना रसे जैंचे आनन्द देखह; ता देखह शुनह; निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि बोल ।[43]

तदन्तर श्री गोपाल मावे मारिबार भये पलाबा कदम्ब तले एका शुतल । तदन्तरे पानीक जाइते राधा प्रेलि जे बोलल ता देखह शुनह, निरन्तरे हरि बोल हरि बोल ।

This passage has religious solemnity and dignity both by reason of its subject matter and that of its rhythm. It presents an excellent contrast to the quiet and small sentences in the Nepal dramas.

In works like the Aṅkiā Nāṭs which intend to teach Vaiṣṇavism and faith in the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa there were bound to be direct and short sentences. There are consequently, no complexities of Maithilī verb and no varieties of declension of Maithilī nouns. But emotional dialogues are present. There are different scales of emotion aroused even with all these limitations in the following passages :

(i) नारद—हे कृष्ण ओहि पारिजातक गन्ध तिनि प्रहरक पथ जाइ आहि पारिजात जाहेक गृहे रहे, धन जन विभव ताहेक छाड़्ये नाहि । ओहि देव दुर्लभ पारिजात जे नारी परिधान करे से पूष्पक महिमाये परम सौभागिनी हव ।[44]

(ii सूत्र—हे सामाजिक ! श्रीरामक धनुटङ्कारे परशुरामक हृदय विदारल । परम तरासे सब शरीर काम्पे । हातक परशु खसि पड़ल । प्राणक कातरे जैछे पलावल, आइ लोक ता देखह ।[45]

(iii) सूत्र—तदन्तर कृष्णरुक्मिणीक रूप लावण्य पेखिये मोहित...कथं कथमपि चित्त शान्त कयल । रुक्मिणी सखीसब सहित लीलागति चलिते कृष्णक देखल । भाटक मुखे येहन गुण रूप शुनल साक्षात् ताहातो अधिक देखल ।[46]

(iv) गोपीसब—हे माइ यशोदा ! तोहारि ऐछन दारुण हृदय ओहि माणिक पुतलि श्रीकृष्ण सब गोकुलक जीवप्राण, तोहारि निज बालक, आहेक

43. *Bhūṣaṇa Herebo*, p. 1.

44. *Pārijātaharaṇa*, p. 5,

45. *Rāmavijaya*, p. 26.

46. *Rukmiṇīharaṇa*, p. 31.

कोन अपराधे अतये कलकलानि भाकुल कहा दूहक वन हानि कवल । गोपाल घरे दधि, दूध लवणूके पुचत । कम न हानी मेल ।[47]

(v) सूत्र—ओहि प्रकारे यशोदा कृष्णक बिचारि नेपाइ परम चिन्ताये कान्दि कान्दि मुरुचित...माटि लोटि पड़ल । तदनन्तर एक गोपी आबिकहु । यशोदाक आगे कृष्णक बात जे कहल ताहेक शुनह

गोपी—आहे माइ यशोदे । तोहों कि निमित्त एत क्रन्दन करह ।[48]

The urge for emotional expression is linked up in these passages with the anxiety to inspire the spectators with devotion and faith in Vaiṣṇavism. Unfortunately, in Mithilā proper there was no proper knowledge of these plays and, therefore, they could neither influence her writers nor make them try to handle prose in this way.

47. *Arjunabhañjana*, p. 8.

48. *Coradharā*, p. 7.

CHAPTER XI

MIDDLE MAITHILI POETRY

I

INTRODUCTORY

The Decline of the Khandvalakula

We have already traced the development of Maithili poetry, as it flourished independent of the Drama, up to the reign of Mahārāja Narapati Thākura (1690-1704). From the days of Mahārāja Narapati Thakura to those of Mahārāja Maheśvarasiṁha (1850-1860) there was a great change in Mithila. The appearance of European traders had an important influence upon the fortunes of the Province. Maithila Rājās got an impetus to assert their political independence. But the politics of Bengal was in the melting pot so that nobody could really make himself strong without a strong military power. The successor of Mahārāja Narapati Thākura, Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha (1704-1740) reorganised the Army of Mithila and strengthened the administration. He proudly assumed the heroic title of 'Siṁha' for his family surmame 'Thākura'. He successfully suppressed the revolt of one Biru Kurmī in the North and received honours from the Nawab of Bengal, Alivardi Khan.

It was, however, Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1744-1761) who was the greatest warrior king of this dynasty. He fought three famous

battles which won for him universal praise. The battle of the Valley of Kandarpi (near Jhanjharpur) was a memorable event in the history of Mithila.

Unfortunately, Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha was followed by an imbecile and inglorious ruler, Mahārāja Pratāpasiṁha (1761-1776). His successor Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha (1776-1808) brought to close this bid for independence. The transference of the Diwani of Bengal and Bihar to British hands was completed during his reign. The claims of the Kingdom of Mithila (or Tirhut) as an independant State were not recognised, and it was reduced to a mere Zamindari under the Permanent Settlement inaugurated by Lord Cornwallis.

The comparative insignificance into which the kingdom of Mithila sank henceforth, was responsible for the decline of its literature. The succeeding generations saw here the growing vogue of the neighbouring language 'Madhya-deśabhāṣa'. The predominent position which Sauraseni once enjoyed in Madhya-deśa passed on to its successor, Braja-Bhāṣā. Like Sauraseni, Brajabhāṣā, also spread over a wide area. It had an added advantage in being associated with Braja the birth-place of Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose stories gained unprecedented currency in Medieval India. We have at this time evidence of its growing influence especially in Eastern India—Mithilā, Assam, Bengal and Orissa.

In Mithilā the development of Brajabhāṣā gave a set back to Maithilī Literature. Locana himself was enamoured of it and devoted some twenty pages of his extant work to poems in Madhya-deśa-bhāṣa. Its use became more pronounced after the reign of Mahārāja Rāghava-siṁha. We have the names of several poets who devoted themselves to writing Brajabhāṣā

poetry. Lakṣmīnārāyaṇa Maithila, Haladharadāsa, Balabīra, Sitārāma, Maithila Ramāpati, Śaṅkaradatta, Gumāna Kavi (author of *Rádhá-Govinda-Sangíta-Sára* c. 1775), Sona Kavi, Hema Kavi, Lāla Kavi, Iśā Kavi, Gopāla Kavi, Kṛṣṇa Kavi, Lacchirāma, Ciranjīva, Lāladāsa Kavi, Raghunandanadāsa, Harṣanātha Jha, Sone Kavi, Gopiśvarasiṁha, Buddhilāla, Faturālāla, Sāhebarāma, Lakṣmīnātha etc., up to the present Century may be referred to in this connection.

Nevertheless, we have a consistent and rich account of Maithili poets throughout the period.

Middle Maithili Poetry

Properly speaking the poets who flourished after the downfall of the Oinivāra Dynasty should have all been discussed here. But we have given an account of them earlier for the sake of convenience in presentation. After Locana and Govindadāsa there was a comparative lull up to the reign of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1744—1761). Vidyāpati's influence became less magnetic, and a fresh impulse was witnessed. During the reigns of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha, Mahāraja Mādhavasiṁha (1776—1808), Mahārāja Chatrasimha (1808-1835) Mahārāja Rudrasiṁha (1838—1850) and Mahārāja Maheśvarasiṁha (1850—1860) great poetic activity took place. From 1860 to 1880 the Kingdom was entrusted to the Court of Wards. Maithili was abandoned as the language of the Raj and Urdu was introduced. The Middle period of Maithili Literature, therefore, ended in 1860. Fresh political, cultural, social and literary influences appeared and the New period of Maithili began. In discussing Middle Poetry, as elsewhere, however, chronological limits cannot be strictly followed.

The poetry of this period is available in the following works :

(A) *Published Works*

(i) "MAITHILI CHRESTOMATHY"[1] (1882)--edited by Sir George Grierson. (ii) TWENTY-ONE VAISNAVA HYMNS"[2] (1884)—a collection of some of the less known medieval poems dealing with Kṛṣṇa legend, compiled by Sir George Grierson. (iii) "MITHILÂ-GITA-SANGRAHA"[3] (1917)—(4 parts) a collection of about two hundred songs of Mithilā, compiled by Bholā Jha. (iv)"MAITHILA BHAKTAPRAKÂŚA"[3A] (1920)—a collection of devotional Maithilī and Sanskrit songs compiled by Babu Laliteśvarasiṁha of Ânandapura. (v) Individual poems published in Journals or separately, such as, Rāmeśvara's poem,[4] Manabodha's *Krsnajanma*,[5] Sāhebarāma's *Padávalí*,[6] etc.

(B) *Unpublished Works*

(i) "MANGARAUNI MS"—this contains Ratipati's translation of *Gitagovinda*, Ânanda Kavi's Brajabhāṣā work *Kokasára*,, Manabodha's *Krsnajanma*, Sūradāsa's *Gitadasávatára*, the Brajabhāṣā *Dánalílá*, Anonymous *Sudámácaritra*, *Tirthávalis* and *Rukminiprasansá*, and other stray poems. The appearance of the Ms is worn out, torn and even burnt. It is at least 63 years old, for Ânanda Kavi's *Kokasára* is copied

1. JASB, 1882 Special Number.

2. JASB, 1884.

3. Published by Kanhaiyalala Krishnadass, Darbhanga.

3A. Published by Ibid, and c/o P. O. Subhankarapur, Darbhanga.

4. MODA.

5. JASB, and also separately.

6. 1914, Union Press, Darbhanga.

by Motīlāladāsa of Rāmapaṭṭī in 1884-5. The first two works alone are in Tirahutā, the rest are in Nāgarī script. The Ms was first discovered by MM Dr. Umesha Mishra in the family Mss collection of Śridhara Jha of Mangaraunī.

(ii) "GAJAHARĀ MS"—a collection of about 100 rare lyrics and Anonymous *Rukmiṇīsvayamvara* and Cakrapāṇi's *Usáharana*. It has also Brajabhāṣā poems such as *Kadambalílá*, *Cauntísás*, Kavittas and stray Dohās. At the end of it there is a commentary on some of Vidyāpati's poems and quotations from Candā Jha, by Dāmodara Mishra of Gajaharā. On the cover of the Ms is entered the name of Śri Viśvanātha Caudhari of Cānapurā, but the Ms originally seems to have belonged to some Kāyastha of Sotipurā. It is written in Nāgarī and Devanāgarī scripts and appears to be written by several hands. It was discovered by the present author in his family collection of Mss. It is comparatively fresh in appearance and does not appear to be older than fifty years.

(iii) Stray collections in the Maithilī Sāhitya Pariṣad (mostly compiled by Gangāpati Singha of Pacahī), and in family Libraries of Munshī Raghunandanadasa of Sakhavāṛa, Lakṣmīpatisiṁha of Madhepurā, etc. They have, for example, Śivadatta's *Sításvayamvara*, Karṇa Śyāma's *Padávalí*, Bhañjana's *Padávalí* (in the handwriting of Viśvanātha Kavi 'Bālāji'),—VISVANĀTHA KAVI'S MS Lakṣminātha's *Padávalí* and other Mss.

II

LYRICAL POETRY

1. *Kavisekhara Bhanjana*[7]

From the Bhanitās of Bhañjana's poems it appears that he called himself 'Kaviśekhara' and was a court poet of Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha (1704-1740). He should be distinguished therefore from Duhkhabhañjana contemporary of Mahārāja Lakṣmīśvarasiṁha (1880-1898) and a celebrated Sanskrit poet of Mithilā. His extant poems are all erotic (cf. his title रसमय कवि) and not hymns as Grierson thought. He wrote Tirhutis and Baṭagamanīs in the direct tradition of Vidyapati.

Usually his style has nothing very unique about it but occasionally he introduces striking and fresh similes. For example, in describing the separated woman he says :

जेहन भेलिह पुछिय जनू ॥

मखिमय विषधर डाँसल । नैन नोर जल भासल ॥

अधर सुधारस पीउती । सेह पिउति पुनि जीउति ॥[8]

In these lines the poet imagines the separated lady to have been bitten by the poisonous snake of Separation and to have been verily washed away in her tears. She can save herself from the poison by drinking the nectar in her lower lip, which according to poetic convention contains the sweetness of nectar. The poet suggests

7. (*a*) MGS II, 40, (*b*) GAJ MS one poem p. 64., (*c*) Viśvanātha Kavi's MS four poems. (*d*) Grierson's Twenty-one Vaiṣṇava Hymns, one poem ; (but Viśvanātha Kavi quotes this poem with Rāghava-Siṁha in the Bhanitā) (*e*) *Maithili Lokagīta*, p. 252, one poem, : but Duhkhabhañjana, which here appears in the Bhanitā, may be another poet. See MMC II p. 158.

8. VIŚVANATHA KAVI'S MS

through this image the intense pain and suffering of the woman from separation, her constant weeping and her beautiful and sweet lower lip.

The following song is quoted to illustrate his usual manner of writing :

एकसरि कोन परि हरि उतरब बिरह नदि पारे।
कतहु न देखिअ यदुपति तनि बिनु अगम अंधारे।
कहैत मोर युग बीतल जकर एहेन उधारे।
[illegible] [illegible] जन अवसन हए(?, परल बिरह दुख भारे।
कि ख(?) कतय जाबेब दह कौन [illegible] होएत उधार।
मोर लेखे जनु वरिसा होय अविरल धूर अंगार।
तकर विएल लति जल सरि न चिरै घन सारि।
तन तापति तओ न जीब न परकार।
कहथि भंजन शेषर लिखल मेटल के पार।
बिभब विपति दुहु थिर नहि कौखन अविरल मिलत मुरारि।[9]

2. *Buddhilála*[10]

Buddhilāla also mentions Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha (1704-1740) as his patron. He was a minor poet. The excellence of Maithili Literature is, however, seen even in his poems. He arouses traditional associations in a new way when he describes a young damsel in separation from her husband :

चिकुर फुजल लट झाडल ना॥
शिरसोँ ससलिकाली नागिनि ना॥
चिहुक उठलि नव कामिनि ना॥
फुलल कमल उर जागल ना॥
ताहि पर जौबन मारी ना॥

The poet says that her uncombed hair are dark and their fall make them look like a black

9. Grierson's "Vaiṣṇava Hymns", p. 90.
10. MGS I, 33.
Maithili Lokagīta p. 241. Same poem with no Rāghava-Siṁha in the Bhaṇitā.

snake. She is conscious of the awakening of her youth and awaits her husband's return.

3. *Rámesvara*[11]

Rāmeśvara, is a very common name in Mithilā. It is, therefore, difficult to fix his date correctly. It appears that there are two Rāmeśvaras who can be identified with him.

(i) Rāmeśvara, father of MM Harihara's mother (author of *Prabhávatiharana* a Sanskrit drama) in the 18th Century[12], & (ii) Rāmeśvara, pupil of MM Gokulanātha Upādhyāya (contemporary of Mahārāja Rāghavasiṁha 1704-1740) whose verses are quoted in *Vidyákara-sahasrakam*. He is more likely to be the vernacular poet.

His extant poem is very sophisticated. It purports to describe in a kind of riddle the speech of a disappointed lady when even her messanger cannot induce her lover to give up his 'Māna' :[13]

हे सखि ! अहूँ एकसरि एलहुँ ।
बूझि पड़ल षट् पति वाहन-रिपु-रिपु-पति-सङ्ग पड़ैलहुँ ॥
प्रकट-सात-स्वामी तावत तो शंशक डरेँ नुकैलहु ॥
मेल वेद-पति-पिताक भूषण वामावश अकुलेलहुँ ॥
ईश इशादिक बन्धन सागर सौँ कोनहुना बहरैलहुँ ॥
वारह-वरक विरह-प्रतिपत्-पतिमे पुनि आबि समेलहुँ ॥
नव-नायिकाक वाहन-रिपु-पति जनकथ कानन धैलहुँ ॥
तैँ एखन पन्द्रह प्रियतम कर शर नायक सँ डरैलहुँ ॥
के जानै की थिक दुइ पति गति जे अनुचित सब कैलहुँ ॥
रामचन्द्र प्रितयम दश ईशक भाव बढ़ तैं घबड़ैलहुँ ॥
कैल न तीनि ईश्वरिक पूजा अवहत खन अगुतैलहुँ ॥

11. MODA, 1330 Sal.

12. I owe this information to R. Jha, Darbhanga; see also SINGH.

13. Cf. a similar song by another poet: quoted by one Pandita Dinanātha in "Saraswati" (Hindi Magazine).

तैं न आठपति मेल परापति अपनहि सुख भुखि खेलहुँ ॥
रहि गेलहुँ एहि ठकक भरोसे तैं एहि काल ठकैलहुँ ॥
चौदह नायक हाथ रहै जे तहि मे बसन गँयेलहुँ ॥
बहु करुणा कै गोपसुता कह अति करकशा गनैलहुँ ॥
"रामेश्वर" भन पुरत मनोरथ हरि सौं हम बतिएलहुँ ॥

4. "*Nidhi*"[14]

It is said that the full name of Nidhi was Nirakhana Jha Nidhi. Nidhi is also a common surname of the Kāyasthas of Mithilā. We know of one Nidhi Upādhyaya to whom Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1741-1761) wrote a letter in 1744. In the present state of our knowledge we cannot say anything definitely about his identity and date.

His Laganıs are famous.

5. *Lála Kavi*[15]

Under the patronage of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1741-1761) many vernacular poets flourished. Perhaps the author of *Gaurísvayamvara* and also probably of the Hindi ballad on the battle of *Kandarpí Gháta* was the same as Lāla Kavi the celebrated writer of Soharas.[16] The following Sohara is quoted to illustrate the exhiliration with which the arrival of a son filled the hearts of Yaśodā and Nanda :

हेरि यदुनाथ यशोमति अंक मनाओल रे ॥ ललना ॥
बनि पथ पइल परसमनि निरधन पाओल रे ॥

छन्द

धन पाए निरधन मगन मन आनन्द उर समाए ओ ॥
कए हरख भन गन्धर्व गन अवतर ओ यदुवर आए ओ ॥
पए लए तोहि यशोमति तनए नहाओल रे ॥ ललना ॥
सुनि नन्द दगरिनि (?) सहित धाए गह आओल रे ॥

14. Poems with Iśnatha Jha, Village, Navatola, P. O. Manigachi, Dist. Darbhanga.

15-16. Two soharas quoted by Śrikanta Gaṇaka in

छन्द

गह आएल नन्द आनन्द भउ सुत मोहि आनन्द कन्द ओ ॥
यदुवंश क्षीरसमुद्र मोँ बनि प्रकट दोसर चन्द ओ ॥
ना रचिना उगिद गरिम पाओल मोहर रे ॥ ललना ॥
जुगे जुगे जीवओ यशोमति का (बा)लक तोहर रे ॥

छन्द

तोहर यशोमति तनए अनुपम देखिअ यदुकुल राज ओ ॥
अति उघव धाव हुलास गोकुलद्वार दुन्दुभि बाज ओ ॥
सुर.नर-मुनि-गन हरखित जय जय शब्द भयो ॥ ललना ॥
कंसदलन कह नन्दघर हरि अवतार लयो ॥

छन्द

अवतार लए हरि हर ओ दारिद दुःख शोक संताप ओ ॥
होल उतपन्न भैउ उद्योग कए चौदिगाबलित प्रताप ॥
घर घर योगिनि-गन मिलि सोहर गाओल रे ॥ ललना ॥
हए गज गनि मानिक पट नट भट पाओल रे ॥[17]

This song is considered to be an excellent tribute to the glory of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

6. *Ramápati Upádhyáya*[18]

He is the same poet as Ramāpati Upādhyāya, contemporary of Narendrasiṁha the author of *Rukminiharana*. His detached lyrics are few. In one of them he describes Rādhā on a cloudy day in her swing. She is oscillating in the air and her veil is removed. The poet likens her to Urvaśi in her aeroplane singing high up in the sky :

is *Srīkṛṣṇajanmarahasya*, discussed above part III Chapter 'III. Lala Kavi is given as *alias* Jhaḍulā in the family f Palivara Jamadauli Brahmanas in village Mangaraunī.

17. From *Srīkṛṣṇajanmarahasya* (MS in Bihar esearch Society).

18. Two poems quoted by Narendranathadasa in his ıtroduction to his *Rukminīparinaya* (one of which is also ound in Lakshmīpati Singh Library MS), three poems . *Maithilī Lokagīta* pp. 63, 233, 234, and one poem in rierson's "Vaiṣṇava Hymns".

पवनेउ उर(द) अवगुण्ठन वेकत होअ मुखकाँति।
जनि युग खञ्जन लफ(ग ?)ल गगन सरोरुह पाँति ॥
बहु बिधि लाल हाव कय पञ्चम सरेँ कर गान।
जनि उरबसि परिजन लय गावति चढ़लि विमान ॥

Her attraction is enhanced by her youthful pride of beauty :

सेद बिमल तनु पूरीत देखि हृदय होउ भान।
कनक बधिन मनगुनि जनु मुकता फल निरमान ॥
बदन सुसौरभ उपगत सरसरूप झंकार।
तेँ उर कल किनिरव हरिहर बचन उचार ॥
उरसिज भार वेआकुल मध्यभाग जाने जाय।
तैँ त्रिबली गुन बान्धल पुरबहि मदन बनाय ॥
एहि अवसर हरि आएल !वसरल सभ अभिमान।
सिंह नरेन्द्र भूप बूझ सुमति रमापति भान ॥[19]

In another song Ramāpati makes a lover request the favour of his beloved as if she were a Mālatı creeper :

मालति करु परिमल रसदान। ध्रु
तुअ गुन लुबुध छुबुध मन मधुकर, कतहु नहि करए पयान ॥
मधुमय माधवि मल्लि वल्लि कत, कुमुद कुन्द अरविन्द।
चम्पक परिहरि तोति हृदय धरि, कतहु न पिबे मकरन्द ॥
शील सुबास रूप तोहेँ आगरि, से जग के नहि जान।
अलि गुणसागर समुचित नागर, करहु रुचिर मधुपान ॥[20]

The lyrics of Ramāpati are sensuous and imaginative. But he is not a great artist of words.

7. *Kesava*[21]

Under Mahārāja Pratāpsimha's (1761-1776) patronage there flourished at least three poets.

19. MS with Narendranathadasa, Village etc. as above.

20. Quoted by Ramanatha Jha.

21. Grierson, "Vaisnava Hymns", p. 89.

It seems that he was himself a poet. He is said to have written a Brajabhaṣā poem called *Rádhágovinda-Sangítasára*[22]. We do not know exactly who this Keśava, a court poet of his, was. We know the following Keśavas, in Mithilā: Keśava, author of *Chandah-Siddhánta-Bháskara* a work on Prosody (a Ms is dated 1900 Vikrama Sam.=1843 A. D.)[23]; (ii) Keśava, author of *Paribhásánkasútra*, a work on the recitation of Vedic Hymns[24]; (iii) Keśava, author of *Pratijnásútravrtti* a work on the Sutras of Kātyāyana (a Ms dated 1270 Fasli=1863 A. D.)[25]; (iv) Keśava Daivajña, author of *Játakapaddhati* (Ms dated 1765 Sake=1843) and *Varsaphalapaddhati*[26]; (v) Madhavanarāyaṇa, Keśana Kavi (? Keśava Kavi).[27] If any of these authors is our Keśava, it is likely to be the first and/or the last Keśava.

The following poem is quoted as an illustration:

सुनह बचन सखि मन दए, दहए चाहए तनु आज ।
पवन परम तरसए जिब, मदन दहन सरसाञ ।
कोन परि उबरब हरि हरि, धैरज धरि धर राख
छन छन मुरछि मुरछि खसु, सखिन जिउति सखि भाख ।
कि करब सुनि सुनि पिक रब निक रब मोहि न सोहाए ।
हहरि हहरि हरि हरि कए, निरदय आजहु न आए ।
सखि सेज सिजह नलिनि दल, तेहुँ तह होअ अवसान ।
बन कुहकए घन सिखिगन, सुनि सुनि दह दुनु कान ।
धरम करम बिछुड़ल मोर, पुरुब कएल कत पाप ।
धैरज धै रहु केसव, रस बुझ त्रिपति प्रताप ॥१७॥[28]

22. JAYANTI p. 632.
23. MMC II pt. i, p. 2.
24. MMC III, 97.
25. MMC III, 100.
26. MMC II, p. 3.
27. JAYANTI. p. 632.
28. Grierson, Vaiṣṇava Hymns, p. 89.

8. *Modanárdyana*[29]

Modanarāyaṇa's name is so placed in the Bhanitā that it seems that Mahārāja Pratāpasiṁha himself was the author of the poem known to be written by Modanārāyaṇa. The poems of Keśava and Modanarāyaṇa are of the same tradition :

जमुना तीर कदम तर हे, एक अतरज देखी।
तड़ित जलद जनु अबतरु हे, एक रूप बिसेखी॥
राधा रूप मगनि भेलि हे, कर धै हरि आनी।
कतेक जतन कटु भाखिअ हे, नहि बोलथि सयानी॥
अनुपम लोचन खञ्जन हे, बाँकहु हरि हेरी।
बदन बसन अभिनत कै हे, मुसुकलि एक बेरी॥
काम कला गुन आगरि हे, बैसलि मुख फेरी।
रङ्क समान फिरथि हरि हे, जनि रतनक ढेरी॥
थिर नहिं रहत मुगुध मन हे, जौबन जग साले।
आलीँगन रस पसरल हे, पुलकित बनमाले॥
त्रिपति प्रताप भन अबतरु हे, नबतरु पचमाने।
मोदनराएन मन दए हे, से आमे रस जाने॥

9. *Harinátha*[30]

Harinātha was also the court poet of Mahārāja Pratāpasiṁha. There is only one extant lyric by him. It is not definitely known if it is by this Harinātha. One Harinātha is also reputed to be the author of *Párijátaharana*.[31] But the work is not available. The lyric which is extant is of 'Tirhuti' class and purports to describe the disappointment of a wife when she has to come back from her hus-

29. Ibid, p. 82. One poem by a Modanātha in MGS III (song No. 32) but the same poem is given in MGS II p. 23-24 as of one Rāmanatha.

30. JAYANTI, p. 632 and MGS III, No. 17.

31. SINGH, p. 204 (Doubtful name of the author).

band's room owing to the latter having fallen asleep:

> कत कला कय कत अगाओल कवहु किच्छु नहि शब्द पाओल ।
> एहेन कुपुरुष नीद मातल जनि रसातल रे ॥

10. *Mádhava*[32].

Mādhava is a very common name in Mithilā. We know of the following Mādhavas who are likely to be identified with the vernacular poet:

(i) Mādhavanārāyaṇa 'Keśana' (Keśava ?) at the court of Mahārāja Pratāpasiṁha (1761-1776).[33]; (ii) Mādhava author of *Rasavihára*, a work in imitation of Jayadeva's *Gítagovinda*[34]; (iii) Mādhava author of *Durgábhaktitarangní*[35]. It is difficult to fix upon any of these as our Mādhava. The first or the second Mādhava seems to be, however, most likely to be identical with him.

The extant poems of Mādhava include a Barahamāsā and a Caumāsā.

11. *Srípati*[36]

We do not know exactly when Śrīpati flourished. We know the following Śrīpatis in Mithilā:

(i) Śrīpati, author of *Anvayálapika*, commentary on Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsa*, belonged to Sakaradhi family of Maithila Brāhmaṇa. Date

32. MGS II No. 24, III No. 20 (author of a Rasavihara, imitation of गीतगोविन्द) ? also one माधोदास IV No. 15.

33. JAYANTI, p. 632.

34. OCP XII p. 315.

35. MMC I p. 225-226 and OCP XII p. 315.

36. Grierson's "Vaiṣṇava Hymns".

1704 Śake (= 1782 A. D.) [37]; (ii) Śrīpati, author of *Prākṛtapiṅgalaṭīkā*; [39] (iii) Śrīpati, author of *Jyotiṣaratnamālā* (Ms. dated 1676 Sake = 1754 A. D.) [40]. If any of these is our vernacular poet, it should be the first Śrīpati.

As a specimen of his poetry the following lines may be quoted :

कनकलता सन तनुवर धनिञा, चिकुर रचल जलधर विनु पनिञा ।
नहि कचभार सम्हारए बेरि बेरि लचकय रे की ।
अमल कमल दल सरस नयनमा, चातक पीक मधुर सुर वेनमा ।
चाहए राहु गरासए विनु दुखे जाइए रे की । [41]

In these lines the poet paints the locks of the hair of the damsel, which cannot be controlled by her.

12. *Mahīpati* [42]

Mahīpati is not known to us definitely, but he appears to have flourished at this date. His poem is an excellent description of Cupid in action :

पचसर लए सर साज ना, कि वइव पहुना समाज ना ॥
हरि हरि कह कत बेरि ना, मुरुछि खसू पथ हेरि ना ॥
आएल जमुना जल बाढ़ि ना, मेलहुँ कदम तर ठाढ़ि ना ॥
आब कि करब सिर धूनि ना, कोकिल कलरव सूनि ना ॥
कबि महिपति इहो भान ना, जगत बन्धु रस जान ना ॥

13. *Caturbhuja* [43]

Caturbhuja is equally vaguely known to us. We have noticed one older Caturbhuja

37. MMC II, p. iv.
39. MMC II, p. 8.
40. MMC III, p. 37.
41. Same as f.n. 36 above.
42. Vaiṣṇava Hymns, Grierson, p. 85.
43. Ibid, p. 86.

already.[44] There are three other persons with any of whom this Caturbhuja may be identical :

(i) Caturbhuja, author of *Sáhityavilása*, a commentary on the fifth chapter of *Kávyapra-kása* ;[45] (ii) Caturbhuja, author of *Adbhuta-ságara* (Ms dated 1787) ;[46] (iii) Caturbhuja Raya quoted in *Vidyákarasahasrakam*.[47] The specimen poem is a Tirahuti celebrating new love :

नव तनु नव अनुराग, माधव, नव परिचय रस जाग ॥

अभिनव एकओ न साल, माधव, दुहु मन गौरव राख ॥

दिन दिन दुहु तन खीन, माधव, के जान बितत कत दिन ॥

दुहु मन बसु एक काज, माधव, आँतर भै रहु लाज ॥

हिदय धरिअ जत गोइ, माधव, नयन बेकत तत होइ ॥

चतुर चतुर्भुज भान, माधव, प्रेम न होअय पुरान ॥ [48]

14. *Cakrapáni* [49]

Cakrapāṇi is superior to the above two poets. We know definitely of two Cakrapāṇis as Mithilā's authors :

(i) Cakrapāṇi, author of *Prasnatattvam* and the son of Satyadhara ;[50] (ii) Cakrapāṇi Pāṭhaka, the author of *Tithiprakáṣavyákhyá* a Dharmaśāstra treatise, dated 1700 Śāke (1778 A.D).[51]

44 Part II, chapter III.

45. MMC II ii p. 74.

46. MMC.

47. VIDYAKARA, p. 7.

48. Vaiṣṇava Hymns Ed. by Grierson, p. 86.

49. Grierson, Vaiṣṇava Hymns, p. 91 and a few longer poems in GAJ MS. (See them in the section II of this chapter), and GAJ MS and MGS.

50. MMC III, p. 214.

51. Ibid, p. 178.

There are one long poem and several short poems to his credit. The following is a Tirahuti portraying the growth of love in the form of a creeper and quietly changing over to other images :

प्रेम बेलि पिया लाओल रे ॥
बचन अमीरस सेच कुसुम पहिराओल रे ॥
फुलल कुसुम रस बारसल रे ॥
भमर चलल परदेस बिसवासल रे ॥
पसरल सरद चान दुति रे ॥
मोर मन भेल चकोर ताहि ओर ससरल रे ॥
एक हम दैबक मारल बिह मोहि टारल रे ॥
दोसर पिया परदेस काटे मोर सुन भेल रे ॥
चक्रपानि भन सुभ दिन मालति भमर समाज आब भेल रे ॥ [52]

15. *Manganiráma Jha* [53] 16. *Manabodha* [54]
16. *Venídatta Jha* [55] 17. *Nandípati Jha* [56]
18. *Jayánanda* [57] 19. *Kulapati* [58]

52. Grierson, Vaiṣṇava Hymns, p. 91.
53. MGS III, No. 1 and GAJ MS Malāra p. 32.
54. Besides his *Kṛṣṇajanma* there are stray poems quoted by Grierson *op. cit.* and in Lakṣmīpati Singh Library MSS.
55. Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MSS. Also in Vittho, P. O. Manigachi, Dist. Darbhanga
56. (*a*) MGS I, Tirahutis : Nos. 24, 31 and Māna No. 57.
(*b*) MGS III, Gaurī Pūjā, No. 4 ; Uciti No. 13 ; Tirahutis No. 26 and 43.
(*c*) MGS IV, Tirahutis, Nos. 5 and 12 (These poems are also in his drama).
(*d*) GAJ MS p. 61 and 80 (same as MGS III. No. 13).
(*e*) Grierson, Vaiṣṇava Hymns, several (all from his drama).
57. (*a*) Three poems in Viśvanatha Kavi's MS.
(*b*) MGS III, No. 36.
(*c*) GAJ MS p, 46-47, one poem.
(*d*) Grierson, *op. cit*,
58. (*a*) MGS II, No. 25. Barahamasa (*b*) and Sahitya Pariṣad MSS.

20. *Krsnapati or Krsna* [59] 21. *Krsnadatta* [60] *Kavi*.

The reign of Mahāraja Mādhavasiṁha (1776-1808) was very fruitful for Maithili Poetry. All the above poets are known to have flourished during his reign.

Manganirāma[61] (1687-1795) was born in 1687 in village Padumākerā (Padmakeli) of district Champāran. His great-grand-father was Harapati Jha, a poet. His grand-father was a great scholar of Vyākaraṇa, Sparśamaṇi Jha. His father was a poet, Bhuvana Jha. He was thus able to inherit a taste for poetry from his ancestors.

Early in life he married in Pakaḍi village. During his marriage he is said to have shown great wit and repartee. He observed that his 'Bidhikarī' (the lady who was in charge of all the rites) was a witch :

बर बाभन कन्या धनुकाइनि । पकड़ी गामक बिधिकरी डाइनि ।

When the Bidhikari took it ill, he changed the lines thus :

बर बाभन कन्या सोतिआइनि । पकड़ी गामक बिधिकरी गाइनि ।

He soon became famous as a poet—there are stories current regarding his acquirement of super-human poetic powers—and succeeded in gaining admission to the court of the then ruler of Nepal. He obtained two villages as a reward from him. In his old age, he was invited by the Mahārāja of Mithilā also but he appears to have declined the offer. He is said to have died in 1795, at the ripe age of 108 years.

59. MGS II 32 and in मैथिल-भक्त-प्रकाश, one poem.

60. GAJ MS——Two poems p. 85.

61. See "Maithila Kavi Manganirāma Jha", by Śukadeva Thakura in *Saraswati*, Vol. XXXVI pt. 2, July-Dec. 1935, p. 209 ff.

Many of his poems are in Hindi but quite a number of them are also in Maithilī. They are some of the most straightforward and direct lines of poetry :

तोहीं धरनी तोहीं करनी, तोहीं जगतक मात ॥ हे मा० ॥
दश मास माता उदर मे राखल, दश मास दूध पिआव ॥ हे मा० ॥
निरंकार निरंजनि लक्ष्मीस्वरि, भवधरनि तों कहाव ॥ हे मा० ॥
सुरमाक रथ चढि तोँहीं बैसलि, दुर्गा नाम धराव ॥ हे मा० ॥
पण्डित केर तों पोथी आँचह, सरस्वति नाम सुनाव ॥ हे मा० ॥
गाइनि मुखमे गान भए पैसलि, सुस्वर गीत सुहाव ॥ हे मा० ॥
'मंगनीराम' चरण पर लोटथि, भक्ति मुक्ति वर पाव ॥ हे मा० ॥[62]

Manabodha *alias* Bholana Kavi (? died 1788) is a well-known poet. We shall know more of him later on. Besides his epic poem, *Krsna-janma*, he wrote several lyrics also. His Soharas and Tirahutis are as popular in Mithilā as his longer work. They are simple and not at all abstruse. The following lines give an expression to sincere devotion to the Lord :

देखब कोन भाँती ।
जम ,जिव मोर कपइक कर धर कत मोहि साखी ॥
विषम ,विषय रस वसि रहलहु वयस सगर बीति गेला ॥
असरण सरण चरण हम सेवल मधुकर भव नहि भेला ॥
सपनहु शिव-शिव जीव नहि भजलहु ने भजलहु भगवाने ॥
केसरि बीज ऊसर छिरिआओल धुग धिक हमर गेआने ॥
दुहु कर जोड़ि विनति अभिनव भय कवि 'मनबोध' इहो गावे ॥
मोर अपराध मानि सरणागत ताहि जेहन मोन आवे ॥[63]

Venīdatta Jha is very familiar to us. He was of the family of Karmahe Behaṭā in the village of Bittho, district Darbhanga. He is different from Benidatta Gosañi. He was the maternal uncle of Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha (1776-1808) and was the great-grand-father of

62. MGS. III, No. 1.
63. Lakṣmipati Singh, Lib. MSS.

the late Duhkhaharana Jha of Hāṭi. His vernacular poems are said to be in the possession of Nityānanda Jha of village Vittho, Post Office Manigachi, District Darbhana. He is also known as the author of two popular Sanskrit works on poetics, *Rasakaustubha* and *Alankāramanjarī*[64].

The next poet was Nandīpati *alias* "Bādari" Kavi. He was the famous author of *Krsna-kelimālā* He was equally at home in writing detached lyrics. Indeed, he is far more successful as a lyricist than as a dramatist. A majority of his lyrics are 'Tirahutis' ard 'Mānas' but some are occasional songs (such as 'Ucitis') too.

The imagery and the vocabulary of his 'Tirahutis' are picturesque and vivid. For example in the following images the beloved tries to explain the inadequacy of her lover's serse of recognising good things in life :

जाहि नगर चानन नहि चीन्हे अडर आदर कए रोपे।
बिन गुण बुझलें तनिक निरादर, तापर उचित न कोपे॥
पड़ल पुरुष थल दुख दुइ प्रकाश ठमाओल तें नहि करिय अभेला।
जौं करमी फूल कौन (केओ?) सराहल तँ की कमल गुन मेला॥
सुजन पुरुष निरगुन जग निन्दल जड़ कँ जीवन देल।
गिरिवर ताहि त्रिवेणी बहु तापर रवि महिमा किए भेल॥
जिनिका कनक परस होय सुशील पशु शिशु अबूझ की बूझए।
'नन्दीपति' एहो मन दय बूझिय आन्हरकें की दरपन सूझए॥[65]

These lines have six comparisons : those who prefer the castor-oil-tree to the sandal tree, those who cannot check two lights (?) of misery and those who praise the 'Karamī' flower only show that the world makes the good look foolish and the foolish look wise. How can the sun (*face*) be called glorious when

64. MMC II pp. 2 and 44.
65. MGS I, No. 24.

the Triveṇī (*the three-fold lines of hair on the abdomen*) (?) is washing off the great mountains (*breasts*), how can those who are like children or like beasts understand what happens to those who touch the golden (breasts), how could the blind see anything in the mirror. Each one of these images is full of associations and picturesquely (and sometimes poignantly) express the extreme sense of disappointment and frustration that the beloved experiences at the hands of her inappreciative lover.

The ingenuity of his imagination is seen in another poem where he goes beyond the conventional comparison of the hair on the abdomen to a serpant and says that they should be concealed because the serpant is meant to bite the co-wife of the maiden :

नाभि बिबर सौं निकसलि रे रोमावलि सापे ।
से सौतिनि बधकारन रे, आंचर रहु झांपे ॥[66]

Nandipati has another vein too, the simpler and tne familiar one. For example, in one of his famous 'Ucitīs' he says :

काग कोइलि एक भाँति रे । भेम्ह भमर एक काँति रे ॥
हेम हरदि कर बीच रे । गुनहि चिन्ही उचनीच रे ॥
मनि कादव लपटाए रे । तैओ ने तकर गुन जाए रे ॥
अलि कौं कुसुम अनेक रे । मालति कैं अलि एक रे॥
'बादरि' कवि अवधारी रे । सुपुरुष जन दुइ चारि रे ॥[67]

The crow and the cuckoo and the black bee (Bhramara) and the Bhemha, the gold and हरदि (turmeric) or the jewel besmeared with mud—all these are valued not by their outward

66. MGS III, No. 43. The Bhaṇitā has 'Badari' which was a pen-name of Nandipati just as Saukvi Gaṇaka or Sukavi was that of Śrikānta author of *Srīkṛṣṇajanmarahasya* or of Vidyāpati. Indeed, Nandīpati is said to have had twelve names.

67. GAJ MS p. 86, also in MGS III, No. 13.

appearance which may be deceptive and unreal but by their real qualities. The implication is that good men are known by their inner qualities of head and heart.

Or in the following poem which is in the vein of his dramatic work :

माङए चाह चिकुर भर, सजनी, सहजहि दूबिर देह ।
प्रथमहि पहुँ समागम, सजनी, उपजल अधिक सिनेह ॥
दुरि भए सुतलि विमुख भए, सजनी, बिरल बसन मुह झाँपि ॥
अभिनव केलिक नामहि, सजनी, नहि-नहि कए उठ काँपि ।
नूपुर कादि नराओल, सजनी, हरल बसन अवसेस ॥
भाव भरल कुल नागर, सजनी, अति उनमद मेलि देस ॥[68]

Karaṇa Jayānanda of village Bhagīrathapura, District Darbhanga wrote occasionally lyrics too in addition to his drama, *Rukmángadá.* They are the common types of love songs. They are directly influenced by the imagery and conceptions of Vidyāpati. The following Baṭagamanī illustrates this :

देखल जाइत पथ नागरि, सजनी, आगरि सुबुधि सेआनि ॥
कनकलता सम सुन्दरि, सजनी, विह निरमाओल आनि (!) ॥ १ ॥
चलइत हस्तगमनी सनि, सजनी, देषइत राजकुमारि ॥
जनिक ऐहेन सोहागिनि, सजनी, पाएबी पदारथ चारि ॥ २ ॥
लील बसन तन घेइल, सजनी, सिर देल चिकुर पसारि ॥
तापर भमर पिबै रस, सजनी, बैसल पंख पसारि ॥३ ॥
करब अआनन गाओल, सजनी गे, मनअनुमानोअ आन ॥
तोहि छाडि भजब दोसर नहि, सजनी माधवसिंह रस जान ॥ ४ ॥[69]

The next song is perhaps his most popular 'Viraha' song :

चहुदिशि यदुपति हेरि हेरि नैन बहय जलधार ।
भवन न भावे दिवस निशि करब कौन परकार ॥

68. Grierson. *op. cit.*

69. GAJ MS p. 66-67.

वनि हमे तिलइके आतर होइके प्राण कुल एक ।
परदेश गेल निरदय भेल कि कहब तनिक विवेक ॥
कुदिवश रहब कतेक दिन के मोहि होएत सहाय ।
से सब विहि विपरीति भेल के मोहि कहत बुझाय ॥
करथ जयानन गावल मन जनु करिये उदास ।
घरे बस वसौ बड़ पिक आओत भ्रमर पिआस ॥[70]

Kulapati was known as 'Sarasa Kavi'. His son was married to Maharaja Madhavasimha's daughter[71]. His great-great-grandson is the living poet Iśanātha Jhā of Navatola. It has not been possible for us to know if he wrote more poems in vernacular than his Barahamāsa.

Among the Maithila authors known to us, Kṛṣṇa Kavi may be either Kṛṣṇadatta, Kṛṣṇapati or Kṛṣṇa Kavi only. If he is Kṛṣṇadatta, then we have the following alternatives :

(i) Kṛṣṇadatta, the author of *Gangá* (a commentary on Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda*), dated 1531 Sake (= 1609 A.D.)[72]. He was son of Bhagavati Devi and Bhavesa (Mahesa?). "This Kṛṣṇadatta received a village (Paonaharana) as a grant, from the King of Nepal. There is a rumour that Kṛṣṇa Datta was ordered to be hanged for using foul words about the King of Nepal. The King, while on bed, remembered a Hindi(?) poem which he could not understand. In the morning he called the Pandit to explain it. But the Pandit was waiting for the arrival of the sad time. On hearing, he went to the King and the King remembering his past order, and desiring to cancel it, asked what प्रायश्चित should be done for cancelling his order. Thereupon the Pandit told him that he should offer 10 thousand Rupees, one village, one elephant

70. This is found in Grierson, *op. cit.*. Raghunandanadasa's Library MS and in Viśvanatha Kavi's MS

71. Information from R. Jha, Darbhanga.

72. MMC II, p. 46.

and a Śālagrāma to a Brāhmaṇa. So the King did and gave him the above-mentioned village. That village is still in the hands of his generations, residing at Hatarba village, P. O. Jhanjharpur, Darbhanga."[73] (ii) Kṛṣṇadatta Jha of Ujāna who wrote *Gitagopipati* in imitation of Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda* in 1704 Śāke (=1782 A.D.)[74] ; (iii) Kṛṣṇadatta, author of *Kuvalayáśvi yannámanátakam*[75] (Ms dated 1705 Śāke = 1783 A D.) ; (iv) Kṛṣṇadatta, author of *Sasilekhá*, a commentary on Jayadeva's *Gitagovinda* in 'Śiva-pakṣa'. (Ms dated 1808 Śāke=1886 A.D)[76] (v) Kṛṣṇadatta, author of a commentary on *Virudávali* of Raghudeva Miśra. He calls himself Kṛṣṇa Śarmā too.[77] ; (vi) Kṛṣṇadatta quoted in *Vidyák-rasáhasrakam*[78].

We have, of course, the name Kṛṣṇadatta expressly mentioned in the Bhanitās of some Ucitı songs[79]. The following is quoted as an illustaration :

जवन सुनिअउ नाम रे
सुजस अधीक सभ ठाम रे
ओ अगुन अधीक पसार रे
नाहि कन जनहि धार रे
छिनि कए राव जौं जान रे
सागर घन सों सिहान रे[80]

If Kṛṣṇa Kavi is Kṛṣṇapati, we have three poets : (1) Kṛṣṇapati of Sakaraḍhı family author of "Anvayalāpikā" commentary on *Raghu-*

73. Ibid, p. 47.
74. Ibid, p. 39.
75. Ibid. p. 33.
76. Ibid, p. 161.
77. Ibid. p. 156-7.
78. VIDYAKARA calls him a Pallivara, p. 27.
79. GAJ MS p. 85, two songs.
80. Ibid.

vamsa, of 1782 A.D.[81]; (ii) Kṛṣṇapati of Palivāra family quoted in *Vidyákarasáhasrakam.*[82] (iii) Kṛṣṇapati father of Nandīpati of Pagulivāra family.[83] It is also possible that some of these may be identical with one or many Kṛṣṇadattas given above.

Of the poets who are merely known as Kṛṣṇa Kavi, we know the following as Maithilas :

(i) Buca *alias* Kṛṣṇa Kavi, ancestor of Jagadīśa Kavi of Parasaramā. He is the author of *Rághavavijayávalī*[84] and therefore, may be regarded as contemporary of Mahāraja Rāghavasiṁha (1704-1740) ; (ii) Kṛṣṇa Kavi of the same family, grand-father of Jagadīśa Kavi who was a contemporary of Mahāraja Rameśvarasiṁha (1898-1928)[85].

We are not sure if the above poets are identical or different from our vernacular poets (a) Kṛṣṇadatta and (b) Kṛṣṇa Kavi.

One of the extant poems of Kṛṣṇa Kavi is given below—it is an elevated ode to Śakti :[86]

शंकरि शरण धयल हम तोर।
कुकरम देखि परम यदि कोपित, यमहुँ करत की मोर॥
सुरतरु अरतर शिवउँ ऊपर, वास हास अति घोर।
सहस दिवस मनि चान कोटि जनि, तनु द्युति करत इजोर॥

81. MMC II.

82. VIDYAKARA, p. 72 (Same as f.n. 78 ?).

83. Vide the family-tree of Nandīpati described earlier above p. 322.

84. Published from Raj Library, Darbhanga.

85. Vaṁśāvalī given by Jagdīśa Kavi at the end of *Râghava-Vijayâvalî* (Raj Library, Darbhanga).

86. *Maithila Bhakta Prakâśa*, p. 15, and Lakṣmipati Singh Lib. MS. "Kṛṣṇa Kavi" in the Bhanita of the latter is "Kṛṣṇapati" (or "Umāpati"?) in the former.

सहब सर्व अति गर्वक पूरनि, लम्बोदरि जगदम्ब ।
दनुज नाग नर सकल सुरासर, सबकाँ तोहैं अवलम्ब ॥
बामा हाथ माथ कुवलय धरु, दहिन खड्गवर काती ।
पाँच कपाल भाल अति शोभित, शिर इन्दीवर पाँती ॥
फणि नेउर केउर फणि कंकण, हृदय हार फणि छाजए ।
सारसना फणि फणियुग कुण्डल, जटा मुकुट फणि राजए ॥
शिव शव आशन पास योगिनी, गण पहिरन वघछाला ।
विकट बदन रसना लह लह कर नव यौवन मुण्डमाला ॥
चहुदिशि फेरव मुण्डावलि, चिता अग्नि थिक गेह ।
तीनि नयन मणिमय सब भूषण, नव जलधर समदेह ॥
शिव सन काहि आदि ब्रह्मादिक सुर मुनि धरथि धेयाने ।
त्रिभुवन तारिणि नरक उबारिणि सुमति कृष्ण कवि भाने ॥

23. *Karana Syáma*[87]

With Karaṇa Śyāma we pass on roughly speaking to the modern period of Maithilī Literature. Karaṇa Śyāma says in one of his Bhanitās that he composed his poem for Mahārāja Chattrasiṁha (1808-1839).[88] We know of a Hindi work called *Dohávalí*[89] by one Śyāma Kavi who was contemporary of Mahārāja Rudrasiṁha (1839-1850). If the two be identical, as seems to be probable, then the date of Karaṇa Śyāma is clearly in the first half of the Nineteenth Century.

A majority of Śyāma Kavi's songs are in a connected series of Maheśavāṇis. They give in detail the various marriage customs in the marriage of Hara and Gaurī, such as, the Nainā-Yoginī, the Saptapadī, the Gotrādhyāya, the Kanyādāna, the Cumāona, the Kobara-

87. A *Padâvalî* in MS (with Narendranathadasa Village etc. as above).

88. Pada 20 (or 23) रस बुझ सब गुन आगर सजनि गे॰ छत्रसिंह मिथिलेश.

89. Published from Raj Library, Darbhanga.

Kautuka, the Mahuaka, Uciti and so on. In one of these he describes an excellent love quarrel between Hara and Gaurī, over the cutting of grass for Hara's ox, Nandī :

पशुपति परम बेश्राकुल, सजनी गे, नन्दी बदन निहारि ।
हँसु तेजल खेल कर, सजनी गे, घास लए चलल पुर भरि ॥
हर गिरिजा संग लागल, सजनी गे, घेरि झुमुखि भेलि बाढ़ि ।
जेहेन उगल नव जलधर, सजनी गे, तुरित याम गेल बाढ़ि ॥
राजकुमारि मह्नुकि शिर झूकल, सजनी गे, महकि देल महि डारि ।
शिव मन बाढ़ल क्रोध श्रति, सजनी गे, मारल चाह सुतारि ॥
हरिश्रर तृण चुनि काटल, सजनी गे, बाटल दुहु दिशि भार ।
रूसलि गौरि हर बौसल, सजनी गे, कौतुक कएल विचार ॥[90]

Of course, this poem is meant to celebrate a funny marriage custom—the Ghaskaṭṭī.

He wrote some Soharas and Rāsas also. In one of his Rāsas he describes in erotic language the sports of Rādhā and other Gopīs with Kṛṣṇa where even Nature joins the general mirth :

नाचत नन्दकिशोर सखी ० बन नाचत नन्दकिसोर० ।
सखासमूह सहित बन प्रफुल्लित ० लता ललित बहु श्रोर० ।
कोकिल मोर शोर कर दादुर ० झननन झिंगुर शोर० ॥
बाजत ढंग मृदङ्ग पखाउज भेरि दुन्दुभी जोर० ॥
धीरहि मलय पवन बह कानन मुरली उठए श्रनोर० ॥
व्रजवनिता विलसत बनवारी ० चन्द्रबदनि लखि भोर० ॥ Etc.[91]

Śyāma Kavi's usual style is unadorned and even bald. There is seldom any figure of speech, any striking image, any poetic thought. But in felicity of language and smoothness of the flow of his lines he vies with some of the great Maithilī poets. In this vein he is at his best in such a song as the following :

90. Pada 23.
Pada 14.

शंकर, रूप धवल शूलपानि ० हरषित मनइनि सुमुखि सभानि ॥
इन्दु दिवाकर अनल शरीरे ० घर रसानल अनल सभारे ॥
सुरसरि सुरतरु शुभ न सुहाई ० पशुपति गमन कीजए चिराई ॥
गन गन्धर्व अमर नरनारी ० शहसा नन्द विधि सहित मुरारी ॥
तृण तरुअर गिरि गगन रोमता ० परद जलद समेता ॥
कनक खदोन मुक्ता सन जोती ० रजक रंग झलकत गजमोती ॥
लुहिल मानलि अलिगण जाती ० भाल तिलक दुति चन्द सुभाती ॥
विष्णु ब्रह्म शिव के गर लेखि ० सकल शुभग शंकर वर देखि ॥ [92]

24. *Ratnapáni Jha* [93]

We have noticed Ratnapaṇi earlier[94]. He was a contemporary of Mahārājas Chatrasiṁha (1808-39), Rudrasiṁha (1839-1850) and Maheśvarasiṁha (1850-1860). Of his stray poems a majority are hymns to the ten forms of Mahāvidyā, to Durgā, to Âdyā and to Tārā, and to Gaṇgā and Viṣṇu. There is also one Maheśavāṇī, one Malāra and one Mauhaka by him.

In all these songs Ratnapāṇi shows himself to be a careful artist of words and a great admirer of Sanskrit. Two specimens are quoted to illustrate this.

(i) A description of Chinnamastā :

जय जगज्योति जगत गति दाइनि चिकुर चारु रुचि भाले ।
परम असम्भव सम्भव तुअ वस पीन पयोधर वाले ॥
कमल कोप रवि मण्डलता विच त्रिविध त्रिकोणक रेषा ।
ताविच रति विपरीत मनोभव सुषमा सरित विशेषा ॥
पद आरोपित पदलस तापर अरुण मान शशिरेहा ।
उरस विशाल भालरिपु मुण्डक फणि उपवीत सुरेहा ॥

92. Pada 26.

93. (*a*) *Maithila Bhakta Prakâśa* 21 songs.
(*b*) MS with Ramanatha Jha. 8 songs.
(*c*) GAJ MS p. 55, one song.
(*d*) MGS III, p. 11 one song.

94. Part III pp. 341 ff.

दहिन कर करवाल वाम कर निज शिर अति विकराले ।
लहलह रसन दशन कटकट कर फुजल केश विशाले ॥
निजगण कलित उपर कय रुधिरक धार तीन बह धीरे ।
दुइ दुइ योगिनि पिवय दुऊ दिश निज मुख एक सुधीरे ॥
रत्नपाणि निज सेवक जानिए मानिए देवि निहोरा ।
मिथिलापतिक सतत कर मंगल मनवच गोचर मोरा ॥[95]

(ii) A description of Śiva :

सीत सिव नीत उठि भाखव बाजव(?, सिवहिक गाएव हो ।
भोरे करव प्रणाम चरन गहि नैन लगाएव हो ॥१॥
सुरसरि नीर नहाऐव विपति वहाऐव हो ।
भोरे आसन उच बनाऐव हिर्दऐ बसाएव हो ॥२॥
फूल अछत वेलपात आन...लाऐव हो ।
भोरे पूजव महादेव सभ सिद्धि नव नीधि पाऐव हो ॥३॥
धूपदीप लए आदृति भगति बढ़ाऐव हो ।
भोरे त्रिना (?) करव प्रदच्छिन हर गुण गाऐव हो ॥४॥
भोजन भाँति बनाऐव सिवहि जेमाऐव हो ।
भोरे सुन्दर स सोआऐव चरण दबाएव हो ॥५॥
सेवक सिवक कहाऐव सोक वहाएव हो ।
भोरे एहि विधि दिवस गमाऐव हरहि लुभाऐव हो ॥६॥
रतनपाणि भन जनमन गो (?) हेराएव हो ।
भोरे पुजव महादेव तत फुल दूर (? वहाऐव हो ॥[96]

It will be noticed that the latter extract is much more moving than the former. The absence of Sanskritized vocabulary does not mar the greatness or sincerity of its feeling.

25. *Jayakṛṣṇa*[97]

We are not at all sure who this Jayakṛṣṇa is. We know several Jayakṛṣṇas :

95. *Maithila Bhakta Prakâśa*, p. 9.

96. GAJ MS p. 55.

97. Lakṣmīpati Lib. MS one song, also in मैथिलभक्त-प्रकाश. There is one Jayakṛṣṇa Mahantha c. 1840 (BAKHŚI p. 238).

(i) Jayakṛṣṇa, author of *Gangásnánasankalpavákyadípa* (1770 Śake = 1848 A. D);[98] (ii) Jayakṛṣṇa, compiler of Viṣṇupurī's *Bhakti ratnávalí* in praise of Kṛṣṇa;[99] (iii) Jayakṛṣṇa, author of *Bálabodhini*, a Jyotiṣa work (a Ms of 1842 is extant)[100]; (iv) Jayakṛṣṇa, an older Maithilī poet quoted in Locana's *Rágatarangini*. [101]

The only available poem of this Jayakṛṣṇa is a hymn to Kālī.[102]

26. *Babujana*[103]

Babujana is a very popular lyric poet. He may be identified with the famous scholar, the brother of Bhānunātha Jha (contemporary of Mahārāja Maheśvarasiṁha (1850-1860).

His songs are mostly Viṣṇupadas which are slightly contaminated by Brajabhāṣā. They are all kinds of Viṣṇupadas—Rāma's Cumāona, Satyanārāyaṇa's praise, Prātī, and Sāñjha. The noble figure of the Lord, His powers of removing Man's ills and prayer to fulfil the desires of the poet form the general contents of these songs.

His Maheśavāṇi and Tirahutis are not very remarkable. They deal with the stock aspects of Śiva, and Love respectively. Indeed, Babujana is not as great a poet as we might expect him to be, if he is really the same as the great scholar 'Babujana Upādhyāya'.

98. MMC I p. 91.
99. MMC II iii p. 101.
100. MMC III.
101. See above Part II p. 240.
102. Printed in *Maithila Bhakta Prakâśa.*
103. (*a*) MGS I, Nos. 13, 39 Baṭagamanī and Tirahuti,
(*b*) MGS III, No 3(?), Tirahuti,
(*c*) GAJ MS p 82, Maheśavānī, 93, 94, 99, 100, 101, 102 Viṣṇupadas,

27. *Bhánunátha Jha*[104]

He was an important figure in the court of Mahārāja Maheśvarasiṁha (1850-1860). He was the younger brother of Babujana Kavi, and the author of *Prabhávatíharana*[105]. His occasional lyrics, such as, Baṭagamanīs and Jogas are sometimes better than his drama.

28. "*Ádinátha*"[106].

Dāmodara Jha *alias* Âdinātha Jha of Maharaila was the son of Manohara Jha, daughter's son of Mahārāja Mādhavasiṁha (1776-1808) and the father of Pt. Gaurīnātha Jha (b. 1885). He may, therefore, be regarded to have flourished after the death of Mahārāja Maheśvarasiṁha (1850-60.) He is known to have written several works in Sanskrit and Maithilī. His Maithili poems are generally devotional. They are all addressed to Śakti. They are generally simple expression of the poet's submission to the feet of Bhagavatī. A typical instance is:

हम अति बिकल बिषय रस मातल भगवति तोहर भरोशे ।
अशरण शरण हरण दुख दारिद तुअ पद पङ्कज कोशे ॥
बिधि हरि शिव शनकादिक सुरमुनि पावि मनोरथ दाने ।
तुअ गुण यश वरण तकर अनुखन वेद पुराण बखाने ॥
जे तुअ साधक पुरल तनिक मन अवसर आएल मोरा ।
अरु अभिलाख सतत बर दाईनि करिय बिनय किछु तोरा ॥
"आदिनाथ" पर कृपायुक्त भै निशि दिन करु कल्याने ।
सुत सम्पत्ति सुख मुद मङ्गल दे चारि पदारथ दाने ॥[107]

104. *Mithilā-Gītāñjalī* edited by Yadunātha Jha 'Yaduvara'—one poem. MGS I, No. 47 and III, No. 28.
105. See above Part III, p. 347.
106. *Maithila Bhakta Prakāśa*, pp. 24, 19, 20, 21, 21, 21, 21, 20 (eight songs).
Mithilā Mitra (almost every number of it contained one song).
MGS IV, No. 1 (if Âdinātha is to be identified with this Dāmodara).
107. *Maithila Bhakta Prakāśa*, p. 20.

29. *Fatura Kavi*[108]

Fatura Kavi is famous for his long satirical poem on the Famine of 1881. He wrote some lyrics too. They are on Baṭasāvitrī festival and on the Viraha of the Gopīs. He is more of a folk poet than a 'literary' poet.

30. *Harṣanātha Jha*[109] 31. *Kārnāta*[110]
32. *Visvanātha*[111] 33. *Raghunandana*[112]
34. *Bhīmadatta Jha 'Bhīma'*[113] 35. *Modanātha*[114]

All these poets flourished during the reign of Mahārāja Lakṣmīśvarasiṁha (1878-98). Harṣanātha Jha is perhaps the last great lyric poet of the Medieval tradition. His independent lyrics are of various kinds—Gosāunika Gīta (to Banadurgā and to Tārā), Sohara, Ucitī and Tirahuti. His famous Sohara is distinguished by elaborate descriptive epithets and choice phrases. The gods celebrate the birth of Kṛṣṇa thus :

सुरगण सहित पुरन्दर करि शुभ डम्बर रे।
देखन यदुकुल सुन्दर आएल अम्बर रे ॥ल०॥
बरिस सुरगण कुसम परसन मुदित पुलकित अंग ओ।
देव दुन्दुभि बाजु अम्बर होत मंगल रङ्ग ओ ॥६॥ ललना ॥[115]

108. Famine Song is published in Grierson's *Maithili Chrestomathy*. MGS I, No. 20, Vol. II, No. 17, Vol. IV. No. 21 etc.

109. MODA, 1922, six poems.
Other poems published in *Harṣanāthakāvyagranthāvalī* edited by his son and Dr. A. Jha.

110. MGS I Nos. 37, 47, IV, No. 63.

111. GAJ MS p 63-64.

112. GAJ MS, Ucitī p. 59 ; Malāra p. 37 ; Maheśavānīs pp. 53, 75, 76, 77, 77, 78, 79, 80, 80 (ten poems).

113. MITHILANKA, p.
Lakṣmīpati Singh. Lib. MS
Other poems with Lakṣmīnātha Jha, Village Haṭī, Dist. Darbhanga.

114. MGS III, No. 32 (but cf. MGS II. p. 23-24).

115. *Maithilī Lokagīta*, p. 231.
GAJ MS p. 56.
MGS II *e.g.* No. 41.

The following Ucitī is simple but expressive :

सुपुरुष हृदय विचारि रे । सुनिश्र वचन अवधारि रे ॥१॥
सखि मोर परम अजान रे । राखब हिनक अभिमान रे ॥२॥
परय हिनक जँओ दोष रे । करिश्र तकर जनु रोष रे ॥३॥
सहय लाख अपराध रे । सुजन नेह नहि बाध रे ॥४॥
हर्षनाथ कवि भान रे । मिथिलापति रस जान रे ॥६॥[116]

The Tirahutis are his glories. The snake-like line of hair in the abdomen of the damsel starts to eat her Khañjana-like eyes in one of the Tirahutis but the poet makes it hide itself in the hills of her breasts for fear of being devoured by the Garuḍa in the form of her nose whose shape is conventionally supposed to be best when it is like that of Garuḍa :

चललि रोमावलि विषधरि, सजनी, लोचन खञ्जन लोभ ।
लखि नासिक पन्नगरिपु, सजनी, कुच गिरितट छपि शोभ ॥[117]

It is worth noting that in two lines the poet is able to condense an image full of allusions to her beauty. Harṣanātha seems to have risen to his highest stature in such lines.

Of course, he is a master of simpler style too. One of his Māna songs has :

करिश्र न हृदय कठोर ।
अवगुन परिहरि परसनि भय धनि मानिनि पूरिश्र अभिमत मोर ॥१॥
सरस वसन्त निहारि जगत भरि परिहरि प्रियजन दोष ॥
नागर नागरि रमय रहनि भरि तेहि धनि तेबह न रोष ॥२॥[11]

(O Annoyed one ! Do not make your heart hard, be pleased—do not see my faults—and fulfil my desire. It is Sweet Spring when everybody in the world forgives the faults of his

115. *Harṣanāthakāvyagranthāvalī*, p. 99.
116. Ibid, p. 100.
117. Ibid, p. 104.
118. Ibid, p. 108.

beloved and enjoys throughout the whole night. O beautiful lady give up your anger.)

कुचयुग कनक कलश मद गञ्जन निरखि उपजु मन शंका ।
तीनि भुवन जनि जीति मदन जनि कयल अधोमुख डंका ।[119]

(The two breasts are like golden pitchers which raise the doubt in one's mind if they are not the down-faced drums of the victory of Cupid.)

Harṣanātha shows the surfeit of older traditions of poetry and it is clear that the time had come for a change. The change was heralded by his contemporary poet Kavīśvara Candā Jha.

Among Kārnāṭa's (a Karṇa Kāyastha?) available poems there is a very ingenious poem. The separated lady (Virahiṇī) becomes a Yoginī because her lover does not come back to her.[120] In another, a Maheśavāṇi, he contrasts Śiva—mad, old and shabby Śiva—to Gaurī :

अति सुकुमारि कुमरि मोरि गिरिजा । बर बुढ़वा पेट सटा ।
कहत "कारनाट" सुनिय मनाइनि । काहे करत जीव खटा ॥[121]

He appears to have a better sense of appreciation for ugliness and the grotesque. Of course, he can write otherwise too.[122]

Viśvanātha Kavi has been discussed above. He has greater claims to be considered a lyrical poet than a dramatic poet. His lyrics are generally of Tirahuti class.

"Raghunandana" may be identified with Munshi Raghunandanadāsa of Sakhavāra. Most of his poems are Maheśavāṇis but some are Ucitīs and Malāras too. His Maheśavāṇis generally give a description of Śiva, his proposal to marry Gaurī, the 'Bariātī', Manāini's disappointment, prayer (Nacārī), etc. They are

119. Ibid. p. 109.
120. MGS I, No. 37.
121. MGS IV, No. 33.
122. As in MGS, I, No. 47.

lucid and simple. No obscure : imagination mars the clarity of his poems. The following are quoted to illustrate his style

(i) आगे माइ ० अपजश बरु हम लेब जग माहीं।
गउरी कहँ हम हे, व्याहब नाहीं ॥अ० १॥
आ ० तेहि अबशर नारद मुनि आए।
मएँना कह रिषि हे, कहि समुझाऐ ॥१॥
आ ० सदाऐ गउरी उँन्ह कहँ पीआरी।
अस दिअ ।पानि (?) वर करू त्रिपुरारी ॥२॥
आ ० नारद वचन मानल सभ नारी।
सुभ सुभऐं शिव सिन्दुर ढारी ॥३॥
आ ० कह 'रघुनन्दन' सुनु गौरीसा।
मोर करहु हे ०...दुखनासा ॥४॥[123]

(ii) हो शिव मोहि जनु करीअ निरासा।
भजल तोहि जानि जगनाथा ॥
शव गुण कहीव (?) तोहें महेशा।
हम गहलहुँ तोहि धरि मन आसा ॥
नाम साँय तुम पुन जगदाता।
जग सौं वाहर हम नहि नाथा ॥
तुअ सम पिता सिबा सम माता।
मिलिहहि कवौ न जगत्र अस दाता ॥
कहु "रघुनन्दन" सुनु हे ताता।
तेजोलह मोहि जानि बदनाथा ॥[124]

Bhīmadatta Jhā (? his title "Datta Navala" may be to distinguish him from Śivadatta or Datta Gaṇaka) of Haṭī and Modanātha of Ujāna all belong to the last years of the reign of Mahārāja Lakṣmīśvarasiṁha. Bhīmadatta's poem is quoted below :

सून भवन नव नागरि मदन उजागरि रे।
पहिल वयस ऋतु कादरि निशि घन बादरि रे ॥

123. GAJ MS, p. 80.
124. Ibid.

गाढ़ गहल पहु रहि रहि, कुचयुग गहि गहि रे ।
कान कत कलप कत नहि नहि, शिव शिव कहि कहि रे ।
बज्ञहिं वसन पहु मोचल, बत मन शोचल रे ।
मदन महीपति शोचल यत मन रोचल रे ॥...
दस.नवल रस गाओल रस बुझाओल रे ।
रसमय विबनि डोलाओल धनि सुख पाओल रे ॥

36. *Jivanátha*[126]

37. *Candranátha*[127]

It is not possible to identify these two poets. They may be the pen-names to Jīvana Jha Yājjvalaya[128] (c. 1904) and Candā Jha (1830-1907) respectively. They seem to be very popular poets.

38. *Durmila*[129]

Durmila was the great-grand-father of Janārdana Jha of Koilakha.[130]

39. *Sukavi Gaṇaka*[131]

He may be identified with Śrīkaṇṭa "Sukavi Gaṇaka" author of *Srīkṛṣnajanmarahasya* described in a previous Chapter.[132]

Many poets of this period about whom no

125. Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS.
126. GAJ MS p. 56, several poems in MGS *e. g.* Second Volume No. 41, *Maithilī Lokagīta*, p. 231.
127. MGS I, 26 etc.
128. (*a*) P. E. N. p. 81, Is it Jīvanatha Jha *alias* Ânkhī Jha or one son of Śambhunatha Jha given in MMC III ?
(*b*) *Maithilī Lokagīta*, p. 231.
(*c*) GAJ MS, P. 56.
(*d*) MGS II, *e. g.* No. 41.
129. MGS I, No. 34.
130. Information from Lakṣmīpati Singh.
131. Or "Gaṇaka Kavi"; Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS.
132. Part III, p. 384.

definite information is available are given below :

40. Anonnymous poets[133] 41. Agradāsa[134] 42. Ānanda Kavi[135]. 43. Kamalanārāyaṇa[136] —may be the copyist of Ramāpati's *Rukminīharana* and several other works.[137] 44. Karaṇa Gopāladāsa.[138] We know two Brāhmaṇa Gopāla Kavis and one Gopāladāsa : (i) Gopāla Kavi contemporary of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1744-1761), (ii) Gopāla Kavi author of *Khandavalákulavinoda*, and contemporary of Mahārāja Lakṣmīśvarasiṁha (1878-1898) and (iii) Gopāladāsa father of Gangādāsa author of a Sanskrit work on prosody "Chandomañjari." 45. Caturānana.[139] This is probably different from earlier Maithilī poet Caturānana. 46. Govinda[140] different from earlier Govindas in Maithilī. 47 Gudaradāsa.[141] 48. Jaya (-ā-) nātha.[142] 47. Jaladhara.[143] 50. Tulārāma[144] —may be the same as mentioned in a Sanskrit judgment of 1794.[145] 51. Datta Gaṇaka.[146] 52. Datta

133. MGS II, Nos. 9, 14, 15, 18, 20, 23 ; III, Nos. 10, 21, 17, 55 ; IV, Nos. 20, 25, 66.
GAJ MS pp. 31, 35, 61, 64, 73, 74, 101, 113, 114, 114, etc,
134. MGS III, No. 47 Prati.
135. GAJ MS p. 83. We know from MANGARAUNI MS that one Motīlāla copied in 1884 a Brajabhāṣā MS of *Kokaśāra* by "Ānanda Kavi". If this Ānanda Kavi was identical with our Ānanda, then he should be placed before 1884. His extant Nacāri is addressed to Vaidyanātha.
136. Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS.
137. Raghunandanadāsa Lib. MS.
138. MGS III No. 37.
139. See above Part II p. 240.
140. MGS II, No. 48, and GAJ MS, p. 67 ; perhaps identical with Govinda writer of Maheśavānī quoted in Part II p. 222.
141. GAJ MS, p. 111.
142. MGS I, No. 5.
143. MGS I, No. 54.
144. MGS IV, No. 13,
145. JBORS, June, 1920.
146. MGS III, No. 6.

Kavi.[147] 53. Dāsa (Āśa).[148] 54. Dīnabandhu.[149] 55. Devanātha.[150] 56. "Dvija".[151] 57. Dukharaṇa [152] (? Duḥkhaharaṇa Damarūnātha Jha (Śiveśa) father of the late poet Vallabha Jha). 58. Dīnānātha[153]. 59. Dhairajapati. [154]60. Dhanapati[155] 60A. Dharmeśvara[156] 61. Nandalāla.[157] 62. Banśīdhara[158] 63. Nevalāla.[159] 64. Premalāla [160] 65. Brahmadāsa.[161] 66. Babana (Babeka ?).[162] 67. Bāgīśvara.[163] 68. Bāsukī[164] 69. Bāsudeva.[165] 70. Bhorānātha.[166] 71. Madhukara (?).[167] 72. Motilāla[168] (Motilāla[168A] copyist of Ānanda Kavi's Brajabhāṣā work *Kokasára* 1884 ?) 73. Muktirāma.[169] 74. Yadunātha.[170] 75. Yadu-

147. JAYANTI. p. 412 (Is it the same as f. n. 146 ?) ; Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS has "Dattanavala" in Bhanita See also above p. 436.

148. MGS III, No. 56 and IV No. 32 in Bhaṇitā.

149. *Maithila Bhakta Prakâśa*, (5 poems) Dīnabandhu Jha of Isahapur ?

150. Ibid, p. 16,

151. MGS II, No. 1,

152. MGS II, No. 19 (Duḥkhaharana Jha's poem from Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib MS.)

153. MGS III. No. 39.

154. MGS I, No. 19.

155. MGS II, No. 33.

156. MGS III, No. 31.

157. MGS II. No. 29 ; also *Maithilî Lokagîta* p. 228.

158 MGS II, No. 34.

159. *Maithilî Lokagîta* p. 405.

160. MGS II, No. 18.

161. Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS

162. *Maithilî Lokagîta*, p 388. For Babeka, son of Kiśorīnātha, See *Mihira*, 1945-46.

163. *Maithila Bhakta Prakâśa*, p. 16.

164. MGS II No. 21.

165. *Maithilî Lokagîta*, p. 225.

166. Lakṣmīpati Singh, Lib. MS.

167. Ibid

168. MGS III, No. 33.

168A. MANGARAUNI MS.

169. MGS IV No. 31.

170 *Maithilî Lokagîta*, p. 220. Also one 'Yadupati' in Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS.

varadāsa.[171] 76. Makunda (Mukunda?).[172] 77. Ramānātha.[173] 78. Rudranātha.[174] 97. Lokanātha.[175] 80. Śankara Kavi[176] author of several good Maheśavāṇis. 81. Śaṅkharatna [177] 82. Suvaṁśalāla [178]—quite popular writer of poems. 83. Sukavi Mitra.[179] 84. Sevakajana [180] 85. Sukavidāsa.[181] (popular poet) 86. Sūradāsa[182]—different from Hindi poet Sūradāsa. Many songs and long poems are attributed to him. He might have been a blind poet or the name might be used by lesser poets who wanted to pass on their poems as those imitated after the famous Sūradasa of Brajabhāṣā (Hindi). 87. Sūraśyāma [188] and Śyāmasakhā [814] might be identical with Sūradāsa. 88. Sujanadāsa [185] 89. Śambhudāsa.[186] 90. Sambhudatta [187] 91. Sanātha

171. List of Lakṣmīpati Singh in "Maithila Bandhu
172. GAJ MS p. 67.
173. MGS II No. 27 and *Maithila Bhakta Prakāśa* p. 17 (two songs.)
174. MGS I. No. 56.
175. MGS and *Maithila Lokagita* (उषाहरण Etc.)
176. GAJ MS p. 34 (two poems), MGS II, Nos. 5, 6. *Maithila Bhakta Prakāśa*, pp. 13, 14.
177. MGS I No. 18.
178. Laganis, MGS I, No. 41; III, No. 7; GAJ MS, y. 58 (two poems).
179. MGS I, No. 58.
180. MGS III No. 46.
181. MGS II, Nos. 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 22, 26; IV Nos. 17, 33, 34, 35, 38.
Maithili Lokagīta p. 302 Same as Dāsa MGS III No. 56 ? or Dāsa Āśa MGS III No. 10 ?
182. MGS IV. Nos. 23, 30, 40, 41, 57, 59, 60; GAJ MS p. 33, Prāti; p. 39, 113, 111, 120, Viṣṇupadas; p. 37, 38, Malāra; p. 68, 69, 71 Baṭagamanī; p. 107 Cumāona; p. 61, 115 Sāranga; p. 59 Caitābara.
183. *Maithili Lokagīta*. p. 73.
184. MGS IV, Nos. 27, 28, 29.
185. MGS III, Nos. 22. 23, 34.
186. MGS III, No. 19.
187. Lakṣmīpati Singh, Lib. MS.

Kavi [188] (Nātha Kavi, who may be identical with Sanātha Kavi) He is said to be some old poet called Iśanātha Kavi. 92. Hemakara[189] 93. Nava-hemata[190] 94. Hṛdayadāsa[191] 95. Tulsīdāsa[192]—obviously he is not the famous Hindi poet. 96. Kanhārāmadāsa.[193] 97. Mādhodāsa[194]. 98. Nandīdāsa (of vill. Navādā).[194A]

From about the 'middle of the Eighteenth Century there seems to have entered a change in the spirit of Maithilī lyric. Love lyrics and Vyāvahārika lyrics continued to be written but more attention was paid to devotional and semi-philosophical subjects. This tendency is seen even in the poets whom we have discussed above—Ratnapāṇi, Gopīśvara, Śankara, Ramānātha, Âdinātha, Raghunandana, etc. tend to write Hymns and Prayers mostly. Later on Viṣṇupadas took the fancy of Maithili poets. The names of Sūradāsa and Tulsīdāsa became popular and all sorts of poems after their name—either Viṣṇupadas in imitation of Sūradāsa and Tulsīdāsa famous Hindi poets, or independent poems—became the fashion of the day.

This tendency received impetus from a host of poets from the rank of Sādhus and Mahanthas professionally devoted to Viṣṇu's worship. Like

188. MGS I, No. 7; (Nātha Kavi-MGS IV, No. 17 and Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS one song).

189 Lakṣmīpati Singh Lib. MS.

190. MGS III, No. 5 (was old Hemana ancestor of Jagadīśa Kavi of Parasarmā ?).

191. MGS I. p. 25 and IV No. 52 (62),

192 MGS I, Nos. 38; IV Nos. 50, 51, 53, 54, 55, 61, 65; GAJ MS, p. 109, 117, 118, 119 (Barahamāsa), 35, 117, 130, 111.

193. MGS III, No. 49.

194. MGS IV, No. 15.

194A. JAYANTI p. 408.

the great Buddhist Ācāryas who laid the foundations of Maithilī poetry in the famous *Caryápadas*, the Gosāñis (saints) of this period gave new life to the vernacular literature by trying to popularise their Vaiṣṇavite faith throughout. Among them the greatest names are those of Mahātmā Sāhebarāmadāsa and Lakṣmīnātha Gosāñi. They contributed copiously to the vernacular of the land.

A chronological account of these saints is not available. But we have[195] the names of Mahātmā Gaṇpati Gosāñi (1703)[195A] Mahātmā Sāhebarāmadāsa (c. 1746), Mahātmā Rohiṇīdatta Gosāñi (contemporary of Mahārāja Rudrasiṁha 1839-1850), Mahātmā Tāradatta Gosāñi, Mahātmā Rāmatapadāsa, Mahātmā Lakṣmīnātha Gosāñi, Mahātmā Harikinkaradāsa, Mahātmā Hakarū Gosāñi, Mahātmā Parmānandadāsa, Mahātmā Raghubara Gosāñi, Mahātmā Kamalādatta Gosāñi, and so on. They belonged to high castes but renounced their worldly attachments and devoted their whole lives to the service of God. A brief account of those Gosāñis who are known to have composed poems in Maithilī is given below.

1. *Sāhebarāmadāsa*[196]

The greatest of these, from the point of view of their literary output, is undoubtedly

195. VIBHUTI ANKA, p. 154 ff. Biographical accounts are generally based in the following pages on this article of Pt. Badarīnātha Jha, Kaviśekhara.

195a *Mihira* Oct. 1941.

196. *Sāhebrāmapadāvalī*, pp. 248, Union Press, Darbhanga, 1914. Noticed in Mihira for 16th May, 1914. The Maithili Sāhitya Parisad Darbhanga has a MS of a large number of these Padas—all quotations in the text are generally from this MS. Also see MGS I, Nos. 62, 63 ; II Nos. 37, 39 ; III No. 35 : IV Nos. 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 37. 39, 18, 55, 56 ; GAJ MS p, 38 ; and Maithili Lokagīta p. 234.

Sāhebarāmadāsa. He was originally a Brāhmaṇa of village Kusumaulī. He is said to have renounced a householder's life on the death of his dearest son Priyatama[197]. He became a Sannyāsī and founded the present Maṭha of Pacāḍhī. He seems to have been a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Tradition attributes to him great miraculous powers[198]. He is said to have gone and bathed in the Ganges even when he was put behind the prison bars by the Nawāb. From the printed edition of his *Padávalí* it appears that he was a contemporary of Mahārāja Narendrasiṁha (1744-61) as his *Padávalí* is dated 1153 Fasli (=1746 A. D.)[199].

The glory of Sāhebarāmadāsa's *Padávalí* consists in 'Viṣṇupadas' and 'Rāsas'. But there are all kinds of songs in it. All of them reveal the passionate attachment of this saint-poet to the Lord.

He bewails in several songs, with the Gopīs, the absence of Kṛṣṇa from Mathurā :

(i) कमलनयन मनमोहन रे कहि गेल अनेके ।
कतेक दिवस हम खेपब रे हुनि वचनक टेके ॥
मलिन वसन तन झामर रे सिर फूजल केसे ।
बेआकुलि पुछयि पथिक सौं रे, कहु गिरिधर उदेसे ॥
जहाँ जहाँ हरिक सिंहासन रे आसन ताहि रामे ।
ताहि ठाम रोयब ब्रजवनिता रे लय लय हरि नामे ॥
जन मोहन बिरिनाबन रे जन जमुनाक तीरे ।
जन जन रटथि अहिर संग रे जन मुरली बजैये ॥
हमहुँ मरब हरि हरि कए रे छुटि जाएत पिरीते ॥
'साहेबराम' सम्हारल रे सपनहुँ संसारे ।
बहुरि ने एहि जग जनमब रे फेरि ने मनुख अवतारे ॥

197. *VIBHUTI AṄKA* p. 155.
198. JAYANTI p. 409.
199. शिव लोचन गुरु शिव सम जसम Etc, *Sāhebarāmagītāvalī.*

(ii) माई हे, हमब जोगिनि केर भेस ॥ ध्रु ॥
अङ्ग विभुति ओढ़ब मृगछाला करब हम हरिक उदेस ॥
काहि कहब सखि केओ ने बतावे गेल हरि कओने प्रदेस ॥
कोन विधि मन्द मेल नन्द नन्दन तेजि रहल परदेस ॥
'साहेब' नीर बुनत धरती महँ सखि सभ धूनव केस ॥

He is conscious of the Divine character of Kṛṣṇa:

(i) देखहि वृन्दावन पुरुष भगवान ।
बुझि कह साहेब धरइछ ध्यान ॥

(ii) निरगुन ब्रह्म धरय तन सतोगुन
लीला करत गोपाल ॥

He waxes eloquent in his numerous Viṣṇu-padas and Prātis:

आदि सनातन पुरुख पुरान । धेनु चराबय वन वन सोइ कान ॥
ब्रह्म अखण्ड निगम इति जान । छितल कदम्ब तर मांगे सोइ दान ॥
पालत सिरिपत आओर भगवान । ब्रज केर नारि करइछ मान ॥
बीतय कलप मुनि धरइत ध्यान । ताहि जसोमति सुत कय मान ॥
तारल अधम लेत नाम अजान । जे जन विमुख तेँहि कएल पिसान ॥
करहु भजन परिहारे कय आन । तेजहु संग जाके हृदय गुमान ॥
मेटि मन दुरमति दृढ़ कय गिआन । साहेब करहु निरन्तर गान ॥

He devotes special attention to the birth of Kṛṣṇa (in a Sohara),[200] to the Pūtanā-Badha (in a long poem),[201] and to the sports of his childhood[202] and youth[203] (in several poems). In his Rāsa songs[204] he seem to dance with the Lord in his mind and expresses his joy

(i) वंशी बजावथि एहिठाम श्याम जहाँ रास रच्यो ।
मधुर मृदंग 'धुम धुम किट' बाजय वंशी करय अनोर ।
नाचथि सखिगण करथि कुतूहल चहुदिशि कुहुकब मोर ।
रच्यो सखि पुष्प माल पहिरावथि चानन करथि बनाव ।

200. e. g. song No. 16, 17 MS Pariṣad.
201. e. g. Ibid 21.
202. e. g. Ibid 33.
203. e. g. Ibid 18, 19, 20, etc.
204. e. g. Ibid 26, 27.

क्वो सखि आगाँ मे चकोर डोलावथि नयनहुँ लेथि जुड़ाय ।
जगमगाथि कति दामिनी यामिनि सखि कयठक हार ।
साओन घटा श्याम तन सुन्दर कुञ्ज मे होय विहार ।
इन्द्र सहित इन्द्रासन डोलल पातालहु नहि चएन ।
शिव सनकादि ध्यान छूटि गेल पलकों ने आवय नएन ।
'साहेबदास' रास वृन्दावन तोंहें छाड़ि भजब ने आन ।
जहाँ बसथि त्रिभुवन पति ठाकुर तह लागए हमरो ध्यान ॥[205]

(ii) मोहन नाचय जमुना तीर ।
नारायन नरसिंह निरञ्जन नाचए जमुना तीर ।
माथ मुकुट टेरथि मुख मुरली मोर पङ्ख फहराए ।
अङ्ग अङ्ग छवि के बलहारी वरनत वरनि ने जाए ॥
आयुहि गावत आयु बजावत आयुहि लावत रङ्ग ।
नाना रूप धय वृन्दावन राधा नेने सङ्ग ॥
मधुर मृदङ्ग घुघरू बाजय भाउरि देथि गोपाल ।
थेइ थेइ कर चन्द्रवदनि धनि पहिरे लाल गुलाल ॥
साहेबदास बसय मन मेरो वृन्दवन केर ओर ।
कखन मेटत मुरली मनोहर नएना नित बहए नोर ॥[206]

Krṣṇa is painted picturesquely:

मुख मुरली सोभे आनन ललाट ।...
माथ मुकुट विहि रचल बनाए । तापर मोर पंख फहराए ।
पीत बसन तन सोभा अनुप । सकल कवि गुन बरनिसे रूप ॥
सुन्दर बदन हरि कुण्डल कान । कोटि कलानिधि जोति समान ।
जलद घटा सम सोभए देह । तेहि बिच दमकय दामिनि रेह ॥
उर भृगुचरण सोभए वनमाल । निरखइत जोगी मुनि कएल नेहाल ॥
ओहि वृन्दावन धरए नट भेस । सिव सनकादि कर इन्द्र के उदेश ॥
पतित 'साहेब' जन तारहु मुरारि ।[207]

He is also conscious of Viṣṇu's Avatāras and miracles. He alludes to the stories of Prahlāda, Ajamila, Gaṇikā, Kubuja, Vyādha etc. where He is known to have redeemed the sinners:

205. MGS I, 63,
206. Parisad MS No. 3.
207. Ibid No. 21.

जे जे अधम सरन हरि गेल। तेहि के 'साहेब' बल गति देल ॥[208]

In one of his most popular songs, he portrays the grief of Rāma when he came back after killing Marica and found Sitā no more in the hut :

अखन आएल रघुनन्दन रे मारिच मृगमारी।
सून भवन बिनु जानकि रे बइसल हिय हारी।
कलपि पुछथि रघुनन्दन रे सुनु लछुमन भाइ।
आज कहाँ छथि जानकि रे वन रहलि लुकाइ।
खन खन भवन विलोकथि रे खन करथि पुकारी।
चन्द्रवदनि धनि बिछुड़लि रे सिर करतल मारी।
पल पल बितय कलप सम रे जामिनि भेल सेसे।
साहेब राम रमाओल रे चलु सीताक उदेसे ॥[209]

Sāhebarāma also indulges in pseudo-Vedānta :

(i) भजु मन राम भरम तेआगी।
तोरो सिर काल सदा सर साधे नजरि पसारि देखसि आगी ॥
मन भमरा तें चलसि कमल दह दरसन रामचरन लागी ॥
अमिय बरिस नित दामिनि दमकय जोति मोति सम उजियारी ॥
'साहेब' चरन सरन सरनागत करत प्रनाम भगति मांगी ॥[210]

(ii) जग जीवन दिनहु दिन सपना।
होहु सचेत हेरहु नन्दनन्दन एहि जग केओ नहि अपना ॥
एहन समय बहुरि नहि पाएब भजहु स्याम केर चरना ॥
एहि जग जननि अमर नहि होएब आखिर साँचे मरना ॥
साहेब भजन करहु हरि सुमिरहु नहि तँ कालके भरना ॥[211]

(iii) ओहि जोगिया सौं नेह समुझि चित, लागू हे लागू।
करत जतने सब मिलत ने ककरहु बसत सभको सङ्ग।
कवि पण्डितगन जनिकर महिमा बूझि न सकए केओ रङ्ग ॥[212]

208. Ibid No. 28.
209. Ibid No. 15.
210. Ibid No. 48.
211. Ibid No. 44.
212. Ibid No. 71.

In all these songs whether Bhajanas, Soharas, or Rāsas, Sāhebarāma writes in an easy and lucid style. It seems that for him it is sufficient to mention the Lord's praise and be lost in the thought of Him. The sweet and peculiar melody of his lines is a decided advantage in this connection. Candā Jha paid a compliment to it when he imitated it in his works[213].

2. *Lakṣmīnātha Gosāṅi*[214].

Lakṣmīnātha Gosāṅi was born in the middle of the Nineteenth Century in an orthodox Brāhmaṇa family of village Sukhapura-Parasaramā in North Bhāgalpur District. His father's name was Baccā Jhā. From the early years of his childhood he had a religious bent of mind and as soon as he could, he mastered Vedānta Philosophy. In order to make him attached to this world, he was married to the daughter of one Sokhadatta Jha of village Kahuā in District Darbhanga. But he could not be bound to the ties of family life; soon after his marriage he left his home for Mahādeva's famous shrine Siṁheśvaranātha. He travelled far and wide from Bettiah to Kāṭhamāṇḍū and ultimately discovered his gurū—Laṁbanātha Svāmī in the forests of Terāi. After a rigorous penance of nine years he was sent back by his gurū to the world.

213. Vide- *Candrapadyâvalī*, p. 262 and in रामायण

214. Hindi poems MS from village Dhakajari with Prof. Shrikrishna Mishra, Chandradhari College, Darbhanga. Also MS with Dr. Janardana Mishra, Patna. Maithili songs are few : GAJ MS p. 146 ; LAKSMINATHI PRÂTI MS with me ; and some published song in MODA (New Series) and in MGS III, Nos. 44, 45, 48, and IV Nos. 24, and 58. Life published in *Mithila* I, and JAYANTI, p. 408 and in VIBHUTI ANKA p. 154 ff.

Lakṣmīnātha came back to this world to propagate the love of God. He used 'Lakṣmīpati' as his pen-name in the Bhānitas of poems. His poem are both in Hindi and Maithili. The Maithilī poems are of all kinds—Caumasā, Tirahuti, Prātī (hymns to Ganga etc.), Viṣṇupadas and Maheśavāṇīs. While Viṣṇupadas (often called 'Lakṣmīnathī Viṣṇupadas') are certainly his works, it is possible that the love songs are by some other poet who also called himself as 'Lakṣmīpati' in the Bhanitas. We know the following Maithila authors who were known as Lakṣmīpati:

(i) Lakṣmīpati author of *Sráddharatna*, which quotes Vācaspati II. He is an old Dharmaśāstri[215].

(ii) Lakṣmīpati quoted in *Vidyákarasáhasrakam*.[126]

Two fine examples from Lakṣmīnatha are given below :

(i) आजु रे ललना गति कहलो न जाई ॥
भरि दिन ऐल छथि निकहि खेलाई । साँझ पड़ैत देलक नोन लगाई ॥
लय सुतलिहि यशोदा माइ गोद लगाई । चिहुकि उठल छथि
चौंकि डेराई ॥
कहिऔन्हि गै नन्द महर काँ बुझाई । कतहुँ सँ लाबथु तेल पढ़ाई ॥
से सुनि प्रभुजी हँसु मुसुकाई । हम लेब चान खेलौना ए माई ॥
से सुनि हर्षित भेलि यशोदा माई । लय दर्पन देल चान देखाई ॥
'लक्ष्मीपति' चरण नवलि जाई। भक्ति हेतु तोहें सहज रूप देखाई ॥[217]

(ii) यमुना में परल कन्हाई ।
गौआ चरावोल गए गोप मीली वोन से रहल भुलाई ०
भुष पीआस लगै अति दारुन बल पोवन अकुलाई ०
बल बीगड़े बीष पावएं सकल मीली लागत बीजै मरी बाई ०
नब बीलाँ जोकी बाद आनी अमृत आनी पाआई ०

215. MMC I p. 469 ff.
216. VIDYÂKARA, p. 125.
217. GAJ MS p. 146.

गोधन गोप पतिआए नन्द सुत कदम गाछ चढ़ीयाई ।
है कर (?) ना लगी नै यमुना मे हाथी समथ (?) हराई ॥ ३ ॥
जागे नाग धाऐ मुख बाऐ गड़ुड़ देषो सिर नाई ।
'लक्ष्मीपति' भाषो कै नाथो सकल देव सुख पाई ॥ [218]

As a poet, Lakṣmīnatha shows greater powers of creative imagination than Sāhebarāmadāsa, but as a devotee his position is definitely lower than that of Mahātmā Sāhebarāmadāsa.

3. *Rámarúpadása*[219]

Rāmarūpadāsa was the founder of Mārī-Maṭha at Samastipur. He is said to have flourished in the second half of the Nineteenth Century. His Bhajanas are very popular in Mithilā. The following lines are quoted as specimen :

नहि आएल गोपाल लागत सुन्न भवनमा रे ।
बटिया हेरइत दुखित भेल देहिया रोए रोए लाल नयनमा रे ॥
मधुपुर अँटकि रहल मनमोहन क्यो कयल जादू टोनमा रे ।
चितवन दशन नीक छवि हरिके सुमरि सुमरि दुख दुनमा रे ॥
'रामरूप' कहल बहुरि आओत निरखब कोमल बदनमा रे ॥[220]

4. *Harikinkaradása*[221].

Harikiṅkaradāsa originally belonged to a Yogya family of Maithila Brāhmaṇas of Koilakha in the middle of the Nineteenth Century. He travelled to Braja and was a great admirer of *Srimad-Bhágavata.* He is known to have written some Bhajanas in Maithilī.

5. *Paramánandadása*[222]

He was the head of Makarandā Maṭha and

218. 'Gīta Bisnupada Lachminathī,' (MS with me) No. 1.
219. VIBHUTI ANKA p 155-56.
220. *Pravesikâ Maithilî Sâhitya,* Pustaka Bhandara Laheriaserai, p. 194.
221. VIBHUTI ANKA, p. 156.
222. Ibid, p. 157.

originally came from Harinagara. The only extant poem which is likely to be his, is a prayer to Śiva.[223]

6. *Jayadeva Svámí*[224]

Nothing is known about his date and life. He has to his credit a Caumāsā wherein the Gopīs long for the arrival of Kṛṣṇa during the rainy season :

बोलु, कागा कदम स्योला पाउ कव हरि आव यो ।
ऊर्ध्व बाँहु निवाउ सखिगन करहिं मंगल गान यो ॥
राधिका मुखकमल विकसित शेष सुरमुनि गाव यो ।
"जयदेव स्वामी" चरण वन्दहिं शरण राखु गोविन्द यो ॥[225]

III

LONG POEMS

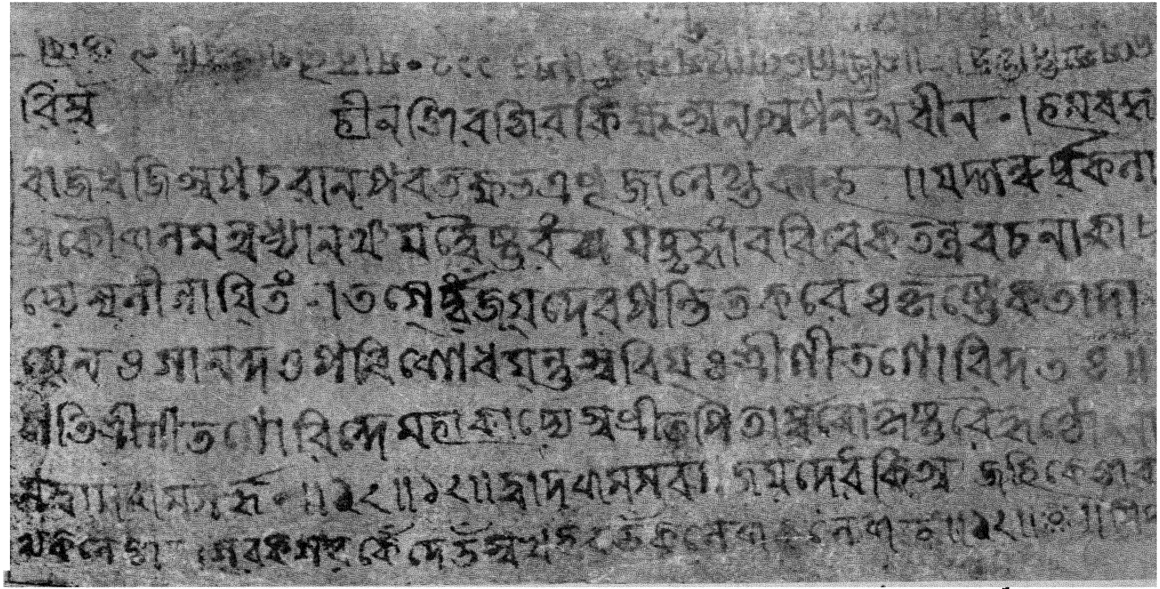
The longer poems of this period are few. They may be grouped under the following heads : (a) Translations of Epics and Long Poems in Sanskrit ; (b) Sammaras and Caritas ; (c) Miscellaneous Poems.

Translations

The translations are really adaptations and admit all sorts of changes in the original. The earliest of them is Ratipati Bhagata's *Gīta-govinda*.[226] We do not know exactly when Ratipati flourished but we find him mentioning that the husband of one Rukmiṇī was his patron :

223. MGS IV, No. 35.
224. MGS IV, No. 26.
225. Ibid.
226. Two MSS of this work are available. One in the Bihar Research Society (which version MS—A is complete) and the other in MANGARAUNI MS (which version MS—B is fragmentary).

A MS OF RATIPATI'S *GITAGOVINDA* DATED 1120 FASLI (1713 A.D.)



The Last Page

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श्री जयदेव वचन अभिरामे । हरिभक्त जन पुरश्रो सभ कामे ॥

रुकमिनि देइ पति रसिक सुजाने । कृष्ण चरणगति रतिपति भाने ॥[227]

Locana also refers to the husband of Rukmiṇī in one of his poems.[228] We know the Queen of one Yādava Rāya to be called Rukmiṇī Devī.[229] The likelihood of Ratipati being a contemporary of Locana or Puruṣottamadeva is very great because one of the Mss of his translation of Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda* is dated as early as 1130 Fasli (=1723 A. D.)

The work begins thus :

प्रणवि सब (?) स्वै लब्ध हरिगुरुगौरीश गणेश ।
भाषा गितगोविन्द कियश्रो रमापति भगत उदेश ॥
जो सब मह सब जाहि मह सिरिजपाल हरिसब ।
जाको आदि अनन्त हए करश्रो सदा सो भव्व ॥
हरि हिश्र अनुज तनु विलम्ब देखि सौतिनि किश्रो रोस ।
जानि अदंकु सिर थापिश्रा गौरि कहत सन्तोस ॥
एहु एकादश सरग किश्र सुकवि राज जयदेव ।
गोविन्द परम आनन्दमय पुन्यमना जन सेव ॥[230]

The poet explains the purpose of his work and translates all the major poems (Prabandhas) in fluent and easy language. The following lines illustrate his style of translating a Pada :

राधावदनतस्य अस्यार्थं =
राधा मुख देखि हरखित चित्त । निबधने जान जनि पाश्रोल वित्त ॥
(हु !)अनकए कापए सकल सरिर । कामे भावए सरवस अदुखिर ॥

227. MS B No. 20.

228. RT p. 44. But it may mean in the case of Locana, Kṛṣṇa, husband of Rukmiṇī :

सुरस सुमति कवि लोचन भान ।
एहन रमनि रुकुमिनि पति जान ।

Also see Bhaṇitās of Govinda author of *Nalacaritanāṭaka* : pt. III, p. 293. This is also very likely to help in identifying Ratipati's patron,

229. Part III p. 293ff, Govinda's Bhaṇitās,

230. MS A p, 1, ff.

सखि मन्डल देखि जनथी उब्बाह । तरनै तर...अए जनि ब्याह ॥
हरि कौ सुरत सरसव सताख । राधा देल...पाओल निधि लाख ॥
हरख अनेक न हृदय समाए । शादिक पानि धावि नहि जाए ॥
उनम दमदन वदन परगाव । दुअदिस बादल रतिरस आम ॥
सामर सुन्दर उर महि हार । पंन सहित जमुना जल धार ॥
रितर सन सामर तनु गात । स्यामकमल जनि पित पराग ॥
चञ्चल लोचन चञ्चल दान । अञ्जन रञ्जन खञ्जन मान ॥
बदन कमल जनि कुण्डल सोभे । बिहुसत अधरबिम्ब रति लोभे ॥
रसिक "रतिपति" स्याम जनि बेस । ताराधरया कुसुम जनि केस ॥[231] etc.

It is important to note that Ratipati regards this work as a 'Malākāvya' divided into twelve cantos :

इति श्रीगीतगोविन्दे महाकाव्ये सुगीत पीताम्बरो कृष्ण बैकुण्ठे
नामद्वादश...। द्वादशम सरग जयदेव मिश्र जहि केशव
आ कलेश । सेवक देओ सुख हरओ कलेश ॥[232]

The second important work of this class is Manabodha's *Krsnajanma.*[233] Unlike Ratipati's work its popularity is great till this day. Unlike Vidyāpati's songs on the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, his *Krsnajanma* is recited with devotion. Grierson first edited ten Chapters and translated them into English. In 1934 MM. Dr. Umesha Mishra edited the complete work.

Dr. Mishra gives two accounts of the life of Manabodha. According to one tradition preserved in Mangaraunī, he was a resident of Mangaraunī and was born in the family of

231. MS B-Translation परिबन्ध 22/21 of Jayadeva's *Gītagovinda.*
232. MS A.
233. Edited by Grierson, JASB 1884 ; by Dr. Umesh Mishra, (2nd Edn.), 1 Allengunj Road, Allahabad ; by Dhanesvara Jha, Union Press, Darbhanga. Many MSS *e. g.* one copy having Kāliyadamana and Govardhanalīlā published in MODA by Sadāśiva Jha of Parasarama, Bhāgalapur ; another noticed by Bihar Research Society called *Haricarita* with Śaśinātha Miśra, Vill. Taraunī, P. O. Sakari, Dist. Darbhanga.

one Sonamani Jhā, a famous astronomer of Jamadaulī Mūla and Yogya Panji. He had two younger brothers Jyotiṣī Bhaiyana Jha and Kavi Lāla *alias* Jhaṭulā Jha (Jhaḍulā Jha ?) If this Kavi Lāla was the famous author of *Gaurīsvayamvara* and the Hindi poem *Kandarpī Ghāṭi*, Manabodha may be regarded as a contemporary of Mahārāja Narendrasimha. Manabodha himself was a good Jyotiṣī. He married the daughter of Saheba Jha of Rantī. It is said that the late Queen-Mother of the Darbhanga Raj belonged to his family.

The other account makes him popularly known as Bholana Kavi. He was son of Pagulabāḍamūlaka Cāna Jha of Jamasama village. He was fourteenth from the Vījī-puruṣa, and married the daughter of one Bhikhārī Jha. He had only one son Dayānātha Jha who is reported to have died childless. The present Zamindars of Madhubani (Babu Śrī Tejadhārīsimha and Śrī Candradhārīsimha etc.) claim to have descended from the daughter of Bholana Jha. Grierson says "He died...... about the year 1195 F. S. (Circa A. D. 1788). This date is borne out by the fact that a grandson of this same Bhikhārī Jha died only four years ago (*i.e.* 1878), a very old man."[234]

In either case his date lies in the middle of the Eighteenth Century.

Tradition says that "he translated the whole of the *Harivamśa* into Maithilī verse, and extracts from the translation are current and extremely popular throughout northern Mithilā."[235]

Of the linguistic importance of Manabodha's *Kṛṣṇajanma*, Grierson says :

> " The poem is deserving of special attention as an example of the Maithili of the last Century, afford-

234. JASB, Ibid.
235. Ibid.

> ing a connecting link between the old Maithili of Vidyapati and the modern Maithili of Harkh'nath and other writers of the present day. It contains some forms which have survived from times prior even to Vidyāpati, and which hence have especial interest.'[236]

Apparently the title of the poem is misleading. It is called *Krsnajanma*, the Birth of Kṛṣṇā, but the poem is not limited to an account of Krsna's birth. It describes the defeat of Jarāsandha and Kaṁsa and contains matter dealing with Kṛṣṇa's childhood. The title is, however, justified if we consider the reason why the Lord took birth as Kṛṣṇa in this world. He came to the rescue of Mother Earth when sinners became very aggressive to Her. When he has destroyed the sinners—Kaṁsa and his followers—then only the birth of the Lord becomes meaningful. It is alternatively named as *Haricaritra* in some Mss.[237]

It is worth noting that in taking the help of his sources—the *Bhágavata* and the *Harivamsa* —the poet judiciously avoids erotic language. When any *Srngára* does come, it is hardly sensuous. Witness, for example, the following description of Kṛṣṇa's departure :

गोविन्द गमन सुनल ब्रजनारी । जे छलि जतहि बैसलि हिश्राहारी ॥
फुजल केस माथ नहि झाँप । लागलि सभ मिलि करए बिलाप ॥
कोपहुँ कटु नहि भाखथि कबहुँ । सहथि कहिअ जत हमरा सबहुँ ॥
तनि हरिकएँ अब हरि लए चलल । हृदय दुसाघ भुसा लए मलल ॥
एहन करूर दोसर नहिं क्रूर । कोन धएल नाम एकर अक्रूर ॥
ओतए सुनिअ एक रमनि अनूप । तकर पाएर सन मोर मुँह रूप ॥
हमरि तोहरि सन अछि कए गोटी । आब हरि फिरथि तकर कोन कोटी ॥
केअओ करुना करि अभरन तेज । केअओ कर धबल नलिनदल सेज ॥
अपने गाँथल कुसुमक माल । सुनि हरिगमन भरम होअ ब्याल ॥

236. Ibid.
237. See above f. n. 203.

केअओ हिआ हारि बैसलि भए ठञ्च । केअओ कए रहथि तकर परिपञ्च ॥
केअओ मेलि ओइथिक आँगन ठाढ़ी । कहिअ तँ सभ अभरन दिअ काढ़ी॥
हम भरि जन्म सुदिनि भए रहब । पुछए आविथि तो भद्रा कहब ॥
केअओ कह नन्द महर नहिं मान । गोवर गणेश गोट किछु नहिं जान ॥
गोकुलाक वुद्द कएँ ग्यान नहि लेस । ईस ब्रह्म घएल अछि मानुस भेस॥[238]

The description of Kṛṣṇa as a child gradually growing in years is very popular in Mithilā:

कतो एक दिवस बिति गेल । हरि पुनु हथगर गोड़गर भेल ॥
से कोन ठाम जतय नहिं जाथि । कय बेरि अंगनहुँ सौं बहराथि ॥
द्वार उपर सौं धरि धरि आनी । हरखथि हँसथि जसोमति रानी ॥
कय बेरि आगि हाथ सौं छीनु । कय बेरि पकलाह तकला बीनु ॥
कब बेरि साप धरय पुनि जाथि । कय बेरि चून दही बदि खाथि ॥
कौसल चलथि मारिकहुँ चाल । जसोमति कां भेल जिबक जंजाल ॥[239]

Kaṁśa's palatial hall is described vividly :

भरि जोजन लए बनल अखाढ़ । देखि सरों मन बुढ़हुक बाढ़ ॥
हमहु खेलाए कएँ कुस्ती करिअ । होइछ विलम्ब नुआ अब धरिअ ॥
लेजिम लाक ठमालम घएल । निक कोठिक माटिक ढेरी कएल ॥
कए ठाम अरिगह करिगह खनल । गुदगर काठक मुदगर बनल ॥
रंगभूमि भेल अति परचण्ड । चौदिस मण्डप खण्डब खण्ड ॥
सए दुइ तिनि कए महला माँच । सभ बाजन गनिकागन नाँच ॥
आगर कुल सिल जनिका जेहन । माँच बनाओल तनिकर तेहन ॥
रंगभूमि सभ देखए गेल । हेठ ठाम नहि लोकक लेल ॥
अपन माँच भेल जोजन ठाढ़ । चढ़ब सिढ़ी बिनु से बड़ गाढ़ ॥
कथि लए कंस बान्धल उँच माँच । कालक घएल कतहु केअओ बाँच ॥
जावत होअ सभ लोक बटोर । आएल आएल भए गेल सोर ॥[240]

These passages reveal the narrative skill of the poet. There is no poetic flight, just a straightforward narration. The flow of the

238. Dr. Mishra's 2nd edition p. 47.
239. Ibid, 1st Edn. p. 9.
240. Ibid, 1st Edn. p. 32.

language is punctuated by appropriate idioms such as: "बकक दए (IX, 36)," "फुफरी (X. 20)" "चश्रोर दुराएब" (IX, 67), श्रमठ (X. 13), नगेरा (X. 18), "बाँहि बजाएब" "कोठबार" "बान्हबान्ह" (IV. 42), "चलथि मारिकहुँ चाल" (III. 6.) Etc.

In the history of Maithili Literature Manabodha occupies a very important place. Though Nandīpati's work bereft of its dramatic form, is very much like a long narrative Kāvya, yet Manabodha's work is the first work of magnitude which influenced the development of Maithilī. Maithilī poetry ceased to be tied down by the rigours of Ragas and Rāgiṇīs and it was felt that Maithilī could serve the purpose of writing a long Kāvya.

We do not know exactly when Vaidyanātha, the author of *Bhāṣācamatkāra*,[241] flourished. It seems that he wrote this very extensive work early in the Nineteenth Century. The work is extant in the author's own hand but is incomplete. The purpose of the work is to translate the stories of the *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas in simple vernacular verses. Each story is written under a 'Prapañca'. It is in 'dohās' and other short chandas, and not in songs. Illustration of its style and technique are given below:

रचल यज्ञक विधि मुनिसभकेँ न्योत पठाए।
यत कुल वसुधा मुनिक गण पहुँचहिं ऋषि सङ्ग धाए॥

From the Introduction

शौनक राखा कृष्ण की हियमे राखि धेश्रान।
तनु मन वचन सुमति कर देल यजन मुनि ठानि॥

Verse 22

241. MS with Indīvara Jha, Dihaṭola P. O. Pandaul, Dist. Darbhanga (noticed by Bihar Research Society). Information supplied to me by the owner.

तखन कहल समुचित कथा गिरिकैँ नारद मूनि ।
पै मेल गिरि कैलासपर शंकरसँ सो सभ सूनि ॥
तखन महीधर ज्योतिर्विद सँ बुझाए ।
शुभ लग्न तिथि दिवस शुभ विवाहक हेतु बनाए ।
से सुनि कहलन्हि ज्योतिषी विवाहक दिवस विशेष ॥

End

इति दक्षक वध शंकरविवाह प्रबन्धक प्रपञ्चः ।

Colophon

One Gangadāsa is said to have translated the 'Virāṭa-Parva' of the *Mahābharata*,[242] but it is not available. Such is also the case of Durgādatta Mishra Vaiyākaraṇa's translation of *Durgāsaptasati*.[243].

Sammaras and Caritas

There are three extant long poems which can be distinguished as literary 'Sammaras' (= 'Svayaṁvaras') : Cakrapāṇi's *Usāharana* Anonymous *Rukminisvayamvara* and *Pārijātasammara*, and Śivadatta's *Sītārāmavivāha*.

Cakrapāṇi's *Usāharana*[244] is a long piece of more than two hundred lines. There is no unnecessary complication of the details of the famous story of Uṣā and Aniruddha. There is hardly any display of Ratnapāṇi's poetic powers in the description of the battle between Bāṇāsura and Kṛṣna. Cakrapāṇi dispenses with the entire episode in the barest outlines. Nevertheless within limitations, the story is told excellently.

The Anonymous *Rukminisvayamvara*[245]

242. JAYANTI, p. 408 and SINGH p. 204.

243. Noticed in *Mihira* 1945.

244. GAJ MS, pp. 23-30. We have no information about his date and biography. See also Cakrapāṇi in the section on Middle Lyric above in this chapter.

245. GAJ MS p. 15-21. In some versions one Loka-

is a little contaminated in its language. The main story of Rukmini's marriage to Kṛṣna is clearly given though there are rarely any marked out characters as in Rạmāpati's drama, *Rukminiharana*. As a Kavya the poem is not of a high class.

The *Párijátasammara*[246] is incomplete and sets out to describe the story of Umāpati's famous play *Parijataharana.*

It appears that the writers of these Sammaras were directly inspired by the Kirtaniyā dramatists and intended to entertain people with their plots in brief and simple Kāvyas.

Śivadatta's *Sitáharana*[247] is in very impure Maithili. The story begins from the time when invitations were issued by King Janaka for Sītā's Svayamvara. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa also arrive there along with their teacher Viśvāmitra. Sita saw Rāmā and fell in love with him at the first sight :

गौरि पुजन गृह से सीय निकसि देखल नयन भरि राम हे ॥
देखि कुमर सीय सखि मुख हेरय धरति खसलि मुरछए हे ॥
टेहि तों जिवौ रघुवर पाउ नहि तओ परओ विस खाए हे ॥
सखि मुख हेरि जानकि मुख बोलय नहि सखि मन पतिआए हे ॥
एतेक बिरगन हारि जे वैसल अलप बएस दुहु भाए हे ॥
सुमरि सुमरि कहु जानकि वारी वैसलि मन हिअ हारी हे ॥
जों नहि टुटत सरासन हरको तों हम रहब कुमारि हे ॥

When young Rāma was able to break Śiva's famous bow the whole world was shaken with astonishment :

nātha is said to be the author of this poem (*Maithili Lokagīta*, p. and MGS IV).

246. MANGARAUNI MS.

247. MS with Jivānanda Thakura, Raj Library, Darbhanga. The other poem is also with him.

बोगहि इन्द्र इन्द्रासन डोलाय वासुकि काँप पताल ।
तीनि भुवन लोक काँप न लागब दसओ दीगपाल ॥

The episode of Paraśurāma and Rāma is touched very slightly. Rāma comes back to Ayodhya and a regular marriage is held. A marriage party accompanies him to Mithilā and the ceremony is celebrated thus :

कन्यादान जे कएल जनक रिखि सुरनर मुनि धाए सखि ।
रामचन्द्र हस्तोदक लै हल सोस्ति वचन हल मालि ॥
ब्रह्मा पोथी लय कर वैसल भाषथि वेदविधान ।
कर पर सिन्दूर जोति मलिन भेल जंब भेल सिन्दूर दान ॥
वेदी उपर गेल शिव घूरय कर गहि लवा छिरिआव ।
रती कामदेव जुग मिलि आबथि सेह जो रूप नहि पाव ॥
तरुन पयोधर तन दुति सुन्दर सोभा अगम अपार ।
आगे चारी दिसि सभ जानकि.. लय कें बग पार ॥
जानकि राम ठाढ़ वेदी पर शोभा एहन टा भेल ।
पाओल अमावस सघन निसि चान कीदहु उगि गेल ।
बिता स्वयम्बर पठी जनवीन रतमन दय येन गाव ।
शिवदत्त भन चरन हृदइ धरि भक्त मुक्त बर पाव ॥

Śivadatta has also been credited with the authorship of *Gitagaurisvayamvara* but it is more or less an abridgement of his drama *Gauri P(a)ra(-i-)naya-nataka*.

An incomplete long poem, Anonymous *Sudāmácaritra*,[248] also belongs to this period. The author's name is not known because the Bhanitā is not available. The story of Sudāmā is well-known. Sudāmā, a poor Brāhmaṇa is made to go to his friend Kṛṣṇa, by his wife. He carried burnt Yava-grains as his gift to Kṛṣṇa :

तकलन्हि अनेक मेठल नहि किछु .
बबक अराठीक थीक बीदु तोरलनि पात पालासक ।
आरैतै से किछु, लैन्हि दाना लगाए
बीछिबीनि आनि सेरेक दूही मेल ॥

248. MANGARAUNI MS.

When Kṛṣṇa learns of his arrival he welcomes him warmly :

हाथ सिंघासन भारि लेल ईश्चार ईश्चार कए मीलताह आए ।

Sudāmā describes vividly to him his poverty :

टूटल मरैआ करती बस सन।भीखन सन परी उपर ।

जरे नहि तेल जरै नहि दीपक फुक घर करी इजोत दोस केओ नहि बसै समीप

ऐ बिधि काटी नगोड बीत दूर हर ब्राहमनी बर दुखकार ।

सेविअ काहि दिन गोट बीन जव क नारी अहीआ जरी जैत ॥

Kṛṣṇa ultimately finds out the gift in a bundle under the armpit of Sudāmā and by eating two morsels out of it, gives the wealth of two worlds to him. Rukminī withholds him from eating it for the third time. Sudāmā does not understand all this and quietly. takes leave of his friend. He thinks :

नहि किछु बुझलैन्हि यादवराऐ, जौं किछु दीतथि जनम ईश्चार ।

एहि तखन दिउ मरैत बहब भल मेल, हरि मोहि किछु नांह देल ।

धीतैक बस्त्र सेहो छीन लेल बाभन बही जैर कैल पुन उबरी ।

When he reached home he found what he had got from Kṛṣṇa. He could not understand fully the change that had taken place in his fortunes :

दूर सँ देखल भवन भारी कौन भुवओन चलल ऐहिठाम ।

जाहाँ देली ताहाँ कोठा आम एहिठाम।

कुल मोर रामचरैआ कौन उजार के रखवैआ ।

दौरलि बाभनि दस मिलि धाऐ

दूर सभ मम गेलाह डेराब Etc.

Tbe ten incarnations of the Lord are described in a poem entitled *Gītadaśāvatara*[249] by Sūradāsa (?).

249. Ibid.

Miscellaneous Works in verse

(i) *Ankavilása* by Guru Gyání (Arithmetic)[250] (ii) *Búti Prakása* (Medicine)[251] (iii) Fragments on Medicine[252] (iv) *Jayasthitimallarája—abhisekabarnanam* (History)[253] (v) *Nepálarájavamsávali Bhásá* (?) (History)[254] (vi) *Tantrákhyánabhásá*[255] (vii) *Bhásániti* (Fables)[256] (viii) *Hitopadesabhásásahitam* (Fables)[257] (ix) *Anangarangabhásásahitam* (Erotics)[258] (x) *Nágarakámasastra* (by Jagajjyotirmalla—Erotics)[259] (xi) *Amarakosabhásánámasahita* (Lexicon)[260] and (xii) *Kávyamanjarí* (Poetics)[261]

It is not possible to describe these works because they are not available.

Many poetical works belonging to this period are in the Nepal Durbar Library which it has not been possible to study at all:

(i) *Gitagovindabhásásahitam*[262] (ii) *Gitagovindabhásá*[263] (iii) *Gítapancásikábhusá*[264] (iv) *Gítapustakam Bhásá*[265] (v) *Gítamálá Bhásá*[266] (vi) *Gítasangrahabhásá*[267] (vii) *Dasávatáragítam*[268] (viii) *Dasávatáranrtyam*[269] (ix) *Devanrtyasangítapátram Bhásá*[270] (x) *Nánágítasangrahabhásá*[271] (xi) *Nánárágagítasangrahabhásá*[272] (xii) *Nánáitagítabhásá*[273] (xiii) *Nánárthadevigítasangrahabhásá*[274] (xiv) *Phágu-Kavitárthabhásá*[275] (xv) *Bandígítam Bhásá*[276] (xvi) *Rágamálábhásá*[277] (xviii) *Rágárnavabhásá*[278] (xix) *Rágártikyam Bhásá*[279].

250. List in *Srí Maithilí*. MS with Narendranathadasa Village etc. as above.

251. Information from Gangapati Singh, Village Pacahi, P. O. Madhepur, Dist. Darbhanga.

252. In my possession.

253. Darbar Library, Nepal.

254 to 279. Ibid.

IV

CONCLUSION

The poetry of the Middle period passed through three stages. The poets of the first years were under the spell of Vidyāpati. He was the ideal poet for them. The next stage came when the combined influence of the Kīrtaniyā drama and the poetry of Manabodha made way for long poems. The third stage saw the remarkable growth of the Bhajana spirit.

This threefold development was the result of three distinct layers of reading. In the first instance it was the reading of Sanskrit Udbhaṭa poetry, of Vidyāpati's lyrics and of the Sciences of Music, Sanskrit Poetics and Erotics. They provided the allusive imagery, the sophisticated ideas regarding love and the highly descriptive style. Men, women, nature, seasons, emotions, poetic craftsmanship—all were directly or indirectly inspired by these sources.

The second great force that guided the Mediaval poets was the vogue of the *Harivamsa* and the *Bhágavata*, and other Vaiṣṇavite Purāṇas. These 'epics' induced Maithilī poets to write long narrative poems. The Kīrtaniyā drama in later years appeared very much like long narrative pieces and gave confidence to the people they could compose long Maithilī poems without any pretensions of dramatic or musical frame-work.

The third great force was the vogue of Brajabhāṣā poetry. The popularity of such works as *Dánalílá*, *Nágalílá*, *Cauntísá* and *Tīrthávalís*, Sūradāsa's and Tulsidāsa's Bhajanas was an important factor. There is hardly any later Medieval vernacular Ms available where these works are not quoted. The result was the extraordinary vogue of the Viṣṇupadas, the

Rāsas and the Soharas of all kinds. The influence of Brajabhāṣā poetry is found in Sammaras and Caritas also. It was responsible for considerable contamination of the language of some of the writers of this period.

There are reasons to believe that the fascination for Brajabhāṣā marred the full and free development of Maithilī Literature. At the same time, we must recognise the spirit of devotion (Bhakti) specially with reference to Kṛṣṇa, entering Maithilī Literature through the vogue of Brajabhāṣā. The impurities it brought about did not last long. Candā Jha and others re-established the purity of Maithili language.

Middle Maithilī Poetry saw at least eight or nine really great poets: Locana, Bhupatīndra, Govindadāsa, Nandīpati, Manabodha, Ratnapāṇi, Sāhebarāma, Karṇa Syāma and Harṣanātha.

APPENDIX

I

THE KĀRṆĀTA DYNASTY

Nanyadeva
(1097-1133)

Gangadeva
(1133-1174)

Narasimhadeva
(1174-1226)

Rāmasiṁhadeva
(1226-1284)

Śakrasimhadeva
(1284-1296)

Harisimhadeva
(1296-1323/4)

ERRATA

Page	*Line*	*For*	*Read*
20 & 165	16 & 33 respectively	Lacharis	"Lahcharis"
20	n. 58	Blochman	Jarrett
40	last but one	eastern	western
41	n. 6	Ibid pp. 13-14	LSI V ii pp. 13-14
42	13	(*after* "610,624")	more
58	24	dekhalahun...dekhahalun	देखलहुँ···देखहलुँ
68	30	(*before* "Oriya")	(3)
70	4	Śāl	Śāke
102	n. 19 l. 2	by the Calcutta University	in the Calcutta Sanskrit Series
132	23	loze	love
132	27	(*after* "music")	it
136	24	(*after* "Dharmaśāstra")	(Cf. his several *Ratnâkaras*)
139	n. 22	NP	KNP
140	21	*Gorakṣopâkhyâna*	*Gorakṣavijaya*
143	6	Hara	Nara
143	7	(c. 1433) [37]	(c. 1435 [37]).
143	14	627	327
143	n. 39 l. 9	Mrlika	Malika
144	7	Sankari	Saṅkarārī
147	n. 56 l. 5	Ms	partly printed in *Svadeśa I*
157	1	reason	season
157	n. 79 l. 2	(*after* "वइस्रो")	न
159	9	(*after* "unity.")	(Keith—*Classical Sanskrit Literature.*)
164	n. 101 l. 2	(*add*)	Dr. U. Mishra's *Vidyâpati*, 2nd Edn., p. 128-29

ĖRRATA—co-tinued

Page	Line	For,	Read
173	27	For, the	The
180	10	and in	which are
185	n. 141 l. 4	Isahapur	Sarisava
185	n. 142 l. 1	JRASS	J(R)ASB
197	22	(*before* "(१) भनह")	10.
198	13	Bachaur in Parganna Padmā	Padmā in Parganna Bachaur
200	n. 17 l. 2	89	39
202	9	Jānudatta	His son Jānudatta
203	n. 27 l. 4	(*after* "TPMS")	N. G.
203	n. 27 l. 2	(*after* "Journal")	Vol. I
210 & 305	8 & 10 respectively	or	of
214	10	Lachaminārāyaṇa (Lakṣmīnātha-nārāyaṇa?)	Lachaminārāyaṇa (Lakṣmī-nārāyaṇa?)
224	10	(*after* "Mss")	of
224	23	Amṛtakara	Gajasiṁha
227	8	(*after* "study")	of the
229	28	pandit	Rājapaṇḍita
232	17	(*after* little)	known
232	31	was	is
235	17	Ramadāsa	Rāmadāsa
240	1	Is he the same of Catura Caturbhuja	(*delete*)
240	13	Ch. II	Chapter VII p. 284
940	17	(*after* "Dulara")	(? Dularacanda-dāsa c. 1745—*Vide Svadeśa* I. 3.)
240	18	(*after* "Puranamalla")	a Nepalese Malla or
243	last l.	(*after* "are")	not

246	n. 177, l. 4	(*after* "175")	नृप जयजोति
248	3	For,	However,
257	10	Ghatrakara	Chatrakara
258	2	spreading	increasing
258	4	developing	develop
259	n 1 l. 3	*Nepale Bhâṣâ Nâṭaka*	*Nepâla Bâṅgalâ Nâṭaka* (see n. 36)
960	23	(*after* "series")	of
261	last but one line	On	Of
274	18	(1)	(i)
285	11	(*after* "moreover")	, for
285	28	Vikranea	Vikrama
288	2	Lagamā	Ujāna-Lagamā
292	6	was	were
292	n. 11 l. 3	भवद्भिः to नामनाटिका	(*delete*)
293	n. 12 l. 1	(*after* "various")	others (*e.g.* Keith)
302	19	Maithila	Mithila
306	16	Garhas	Gārhā
309	ε5	upon	(*delete*)
310	18	produces	suggests
310	30	(*after* "those")	māna
316	18	forces	force
324	8	becames	becomes
329	n 59 l. 2	to be	(*delete*)
331	4	practices	practises
333	9	(*after* "1808")	See GAJ MS p. 66.67. See below p 423.
335	last but two lines	fall	fail
335	last line	baby's	babies

ERRATA—*concluded*

Page	*Line*	*For*	*Read*
375	5	Nepal	Mithila
342	21, 22	to Uṣa the daughter of Bāṇasura	(*delete*)
345	25	into	in
345	27	trembled	tremble
348	10	Maithila Court	Khaṇḍavalạkula
350	13	dialogues are	conversation is
354	26	India's	Indra's
356	10	(*after* "last")	and the
356	n. 74 l. 1	detailed	detail
359	8	Maithila	Maithili
366	21	of	or
369 & 437	2 & 10 respectively	to	of
371	3	(*after* "only")	extant
372	last line	Deka	Deva
373	4	are	is
375	5	Nepal	Mithila
381	n. 1. l. 2	(*after* "and")	some
389	3 to 7	twice...	two labourers a day during the month
389	3 to 7	half a day per month...	half a day during the whole month
414	21	the	a
417	n. 44	II	VI p. 211
438	15	This...Caturānanana	(*delete*)
461	28	(*after* "people")	that